

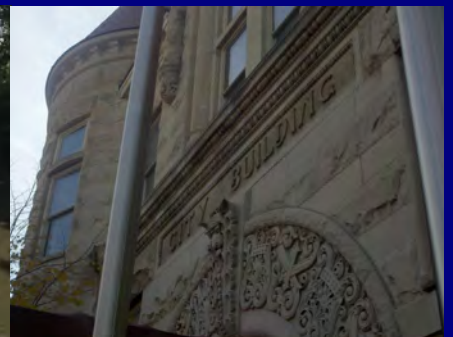


# CITY OF HUNTINGTON INDIANA



## 2022 UPDATE

### 2012 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



**Original Adoption:**

**City of Huntington Plan Commission**

Public Hearing: August 30, 2012

Adoption: August 30, 2012

Resolution: 1-R-12

**City of Huntington Common Council**

Adoption: September 11, 2012

Resolution: 14-R-12

**Updates & Amendments:**

Date	Description
1. August 9, 2016	Future Land Use Map Update - incorporate recently annexed areas PC: 7/28/16 1-R-16 Council: 8/9/16 9-R-16
2. April 9, 2019	2019 Plan Update - Regularly scheduled plan maintenance PC: 3/28/19 1-R-19 Council: 4/9/19 6-R-19
3. February 9, 2021	Future Land Use Map Update - incorporate recently annexed & fringe areas PC: 1/28/21 1-R-21 Council: 2/9/21 1-R-21
4. September 27, 2022	Future Land Use Map Update - update recently annexed & fringe areas PC: 9/22/22 1-R-22 Council: 9/27/22 7-R-22



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan represents the cumulative results of the efforts of a public planning process involving the residents of Huntington, community stakeholders, public and private institutions, and public officials. The hard work of these participants in the overall process is reflected in the following document which celebrates the unique history of Huntington and also creates a vision for future prosperity for residents and visitors for many generations to come. Although not individually recognized, sincere thanks are extended to everyone who provided input into this document. Their interest and suggestions have helped create a plan which represents the wishes of Huntington's residents and without which this plan would not have been possible.*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **Mayor of the City of Huntington**

Brooks Feters

### **Huntington Common Council**

Charles Chapman, 1st District  
Richard Strick, 3rd District  
Joe Blomeke, 5th District  
Jack Slusser, At Large

Paul Pike, 2nd District  
Dave Funk, 4th District  
Seth Marshall, At Large

### **City Clerk-Treasurer**

Christi McElhaney

### **Board of Public Works & Safety**

Mayor Brooks Feters  
Dr. Dwight Brautigam  
Charles Chapman

Anthony Lisincchia  
Kathy Elmore

### **City of Huntington Plan Commission**

Ashley Allen  
Anthony Goodnight  
Scott Stevens  
Dorothy Webb

Adam Cuttriss  
Evan Rhoades  
Richard Strick  
*James Sprowl (County Plan Advisory Member)*

### **City of Huntington Board of Zoning Appeals**

Ashley Allen  
Anthony Goodnight  
Amy Richert

Patricia Brown  
Chris Kauffman

### **City of Huntington Boards & Commissions**

Board of Aviation  
Economic Development Commission  
Redevelopment Commission

Citizens Advisory Committee-LTCP  
Historic Review Board  
Stormwater Management Board



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### City of Huntington Departments & Offices

Airport	City Attorney
City Clerk-Treasurer's Office	Community Development & Redevelopment
City Engineering Department	City Garage
City Landfill	Fire Department
Human Resources Department	Mayors Office
Police Department	Parks & Recreation Department
Street Department	Water Department
Water Pollution Control Department	

### Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee - 2012 Plan Adoption

Charles Chapman	Anthony Goodnight
Rick DeLaney	Jack Snover
Jack Slusser	John Niederman
Jay Rinehart	Larry Buzzard
Kim Haneline	Ruth Marsh
Pone Vongphachanh	Steve Maxwell
Shirley Powell	Rose Wall
Pam Pranger	Bryn Keplinger, Staff Facilitator

### Steering Committee Meeting Attendees - 2012 Plan Adoption

Steve Kimmel, Huntington County Chamber of Commerce  
Tina Bobilya, Huntington County Visitors & Convention Bureau  
Rich Najuch, Main Street Huntington  
Teresa Plasterer, Main Street Huntington  
Dave Schoeff, Director of Engineering  
John Paff, Huntington University  
Steve Schenkel, Huntington County Community School Corporation  
Randy Prange, Life Long Learning of Huntington County  
Sister Rita Musante, Victory Noll Center  
Mark Wickersham, Huntington County Economic Development  
Tom Emely, Chief of Police  
Darold Harlan, Water Superintendent  
Colin Bullock, Water Pollution Control Superintendent  
Dave Spencer, Street & Sanitation Superintendent  
Jean Wright, Huntington County Habitat for Humanity  
Joe Rakoczy, Huntington County Department of Health  
Sue Leedy, Huntington Park Board  
Cathy Wright, Historic Landmarks

### Community Development & Redevelopment Department

Bryn Keplinger, Director	Shad Paul, Building Commissioner
Miranda Snelling, Office Coordinator	





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

*“Urban Planning works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations.*

*Planning enables civic leaders, businesses, and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives.*

*Good planning helps create communities that offer better choices for where and how people live. Planning helps communities to envision their future. It helps them find the right balance of new development and essential services, environmental protection, and innovative change.”*

*-American Planning Association-*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	1
Table of Contents.....	5
<b>I. Introduction</b>	
A. Comprehensive Planning.....	I-3
B. Previous Comprehensive Plans.....	I-4
C. Plan Navigation.....	I-5
D. Regional Context Study Area.....	I-6
E. Population and Socio-Economic Statistics.....	I-6
F. Historical Context.....	I-13
G. Planning Process.....	I-16
H. General Land Use Planning Objectives.....	I-17
I. Coordination with other Plans and Reports.....	I-18
<b>II. Community Input</b>	
A. Introduction.....	II-3
B. Steering Committee.....	II-3
C. Community Participation.....	II-5
D. Educating Citizen Planners.....	II-6
E. SWOT.....	II-6
F. Summary.....	II-8
<b>III. Chapter Visions</b>	
Mission Statement.....	III-3
Vision Statement.....	III-5
A. City Identity and Image.....	III-7
B. Government and Community Services.....	III-7
C. Downtown.....	III-7
D. Economic Development.....	III-8
E. Education.....	III-8
F. Transportation.....	III-8
G. Housing.....	III-8
H. Parks and Recreation.....	III-9
I. Sustainability and Preservation.....	III-9
J. Land Use.....	III-9
<b>IV. City Image and Identity</b>	
A. Introduction.....	IV-3
B. Goals and Objectives.....	IV-4
C. Districts.....	IV-5
D. Gateways.....	IV-8
E. Corridors.....	IV-10
F. City Issues.....	IV-12



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>V.</b>	<b>Government and Community Services</b>	
A.	Introduction.....	V-3
B.	Goals and Objectives.....	V-3
C.	Organizations and Regulatory Structure.....	V-4
D.	Annexation.....	V-9
E.	Water and Sewer.....	V-10
F.	City Services Department.....	V-12
G.	Public Safety.....	V-13
H.	Natural Gas, Electric, and Telecommunications.....	V-14
I.	Healthcare.....	V-16
J.	Government and Community Services Maps.....	V-17
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Downtown</b>	
A.	Introduction.....	VI-3
B.	Goals and Objectives.....	VI-4
C.	Key Organizations.....	VI-5
D.	Built and Natural Environment.....	VI-7
E.	Aesthetics.....	VI-10
F.	Retail.....	VI-11
G.	Connectivity and Accessibility.....	VI-13
H.	Arts and Culture.....	VI-16
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	
A.	Introduction.....	VII-3
B.	Goals and Objectives.....	VII-4
C.	Economic Base.....	VII-5
D.	Industrial Development.....	VII-12
E.	Office Development.....	VII-14
F.	Retail Development.....	VII-15
G.	Tourism.....	VII-17
H.	Economic Incentives.....	VII-18
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>Education</b>	
A.	Introduction.....	VII-3
B.	Goals and Objectives.....	VII-4
C.	Pre-Kindergarten Through 12th Grade.....	VII-5
D.	University Community.....	VII-11
E.	Public Library.....	VII-13
F.	Career Opportunities.....	VII-14
G.	Youth Programs.....	VII-16

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>IX.</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	
	A. Introduction.....	IX-3
	B. Goals and Objectives.....	IX-4
	C. Transportation System and Existing Network.....	IX-5
	D. Street Functional Classifications.....	IX-6
	E. Average Daily Traffic.....	IX-9
	F. Improvement Planning and Scheduling.....	IX-11
	G. Rights-of-Way.....	IX-12
	H. Public Transportation.....	IX-12
	I. Rail.....	IX-13
	J. Air.....	IX-13
	K. Land Use and Transportation Linkages.....	IX-14
	L. Transportation Management Techniques.....	IX-15
	M. Strategies and Recommendations.....	IX-16
	N. Transportation Maps.....	IX-18
<b>X.</b>	<b>Housing</b>	
	A. Introduction.....	X-3
	B. Goals and Objectives.....	X-4
	C. Housing Base.....	X-5
	D. Housing Density Map.....	X-15
<b>XI.</b>	<b>Parks and Recreation</b>	
	A. Introduction.....	XI-3
	B. Goals and Objectives.....	XI-4
	C. Parks and Playgrounds.....	XI-5
	D. Trails and Greenways.....	XI-11
	E. Recreation Programs.....	XI-12
	F. Recreation Areas.....	XI-14
	G. Recreation Facilities.....	XI-16
<b>XII.</b>	<b>Sustainability and Preservation</b>	
	A. Introduction.....	XII-3
	B. Goals and Objectives.....	XII-4
	C. Natural Resources.....	XII-5
	D. Historic Preservation.....	XII-9
	E. Environmental Protection.....	XII-16
	F. Sustainability and Preservation Maps.....	XII-18

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>XIII.</b>	<b>Land Use</b>	
A.	Introduction.....	XIII-3
B.	Goals and Objectives.....	XIII-4
C.	Existing Land Uses.....	XIII-6
D.	Future Land Uses.....	XIII-11
E.	Development Standards.....	XIII-15
F.	Zoning.....	XIII-16
G.	Subdivision Controls.....	XIII-18
H.	Land Use Maps.....	XIII-18
<b>XIV.</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	
A.	Introduction.....	XIV-3
B.	How to Use the Plan.....	XIV-4
C.	Implementation Matrix.....	XIV-5
D.	Completed Strategies and Recommendations.....	XIV-23
<b>XV.</b>	<b>Glossary</b>	







## I. INTRODUCTION

*“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably will themselves not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die.”*

*-Daniel Hudson Burnham-*



## A. Comprehensive Planning

A Comprehensive Plan is a document that provides insight to local governing bodies about the existing area and its conditions. It contains basic background information and input from the community to determine current trends, in order for community goals and objectives to be established. This helps identify community values and needs while serving to protect the public interests.

A Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for government officials to utilize during the decision making processes that they are challenged with. A Plan can serve as a budgeting tool that targets the need and timing for how tax dollars are allocated. A Plan is the foundation for which decisions are made for future uses of the land, including re-zonings and variances. The plan also anticipates future growth and development while balancing land uses that impact the quality of life of local citizens. The plan does so by providing strategies that help ensure consistent and compatible growth patterns throughout the community.

The City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan provides the community with a number of long-term visions, goal statements, objectives, and strategies and recommendations that will help guide and shape the City's future growth and development. This plan addresses objectives for future development, statements of policy relating to land use, and statements of policy regarding the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities - all requirements of Indiana Code. This plan also goes beyond these minimum requirements and addresses strategies and recommendations as they relate to transportation needs, economic development, housing needs and standards, historical and cultural resources, parks and recreation, and community aesthetics and identity.

As adopted, the City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan serves as one of the primary tools used by the City Plan Commission, City Board of Zoning Appeals, the City of Huntington Common Council, and City administration. The Plan can also serve as a valuable resource to the City departments, public and municipal utilities, boards and commissions, and other public agencies.

The City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan also provides a community-wide framework for many other non-government community organizations by promoting ongoing planning activities that are an important part of everyday life in Huntington. These planning activities include neighborhood planning, special area plans, transportation planning, and other planning and development activities that will promote local cultural and heritage resources while building upon the overall quality of life for Huntington residents.



## **B. Previous Comprehensive Plans**

The previous Comprehensive Plan for the City of Huntington was known as “Huntington - The Comprehensive Plan”. This document was completed June, 1969 by a consulting firm from Fort Wayne, Indiana. The document presented policies and proposals to guide the growth and development of the City until approximately 1990. Specific elements of the plan focused on future land use, major thoroughfares, public utilities, community facilities, and the central business district. This was the plan that proposed to shut down Jefferson Street to vehicular traffic in order to create a pedestrian mall. It was at this time that pedestrian malls were successful in regions with warmer, dryer climates, and it was thought that it could be easily applied to communities in Indiana.

In October 1994, “The Huntington County Tomorrow Strategic Plan” was created. This document, never formally adopted, has served as a valuable resource county wide. It has also proven to be a very valuable document for the City of Huntington. It was established through citizen participation, so it allowed citizen voices to be heard as they addressed concerns and built upon community strengths. The Huntington County Tomorrow plan or HCT for short, helped create the foundation to establish greater educational programs and an economic development corporation. This document, though not an official plan, has served as a means to address some growth and development issues that the City has faced since the mid-1990’s. This plan lead to the creation of another plan that built off of its foundations, in 2004 the Huntington County Vision in Progress plan was completed.

In the early part of 2000, the Huntington Countywide Department of Community Development set out to develop and establish a plan that would serve the entire county. An outside consulting firm was hired from Indianapolis to conduct meetings that were geared to gather as much information as possible about the community from its citizens. As the Department faced more challenges with growing communities, monies had to be reallocated from the Plan to hire personnel. As a result, the consulting firm was unable to write the official plan, but stayed on to finish the information gathering process that would be used by the Department to write the Comprehensive Plan in-house. The majority of the information obtained in the citizen participation programs was geared toward the rural parts of the county and therefore the Department opted to write a Plan for Huntington County and would later address plans for the municipalities. This Huntington County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2005.

January of 2007, the Huntington Countywide Department of Community Development and City of Huntington Plan Commission determined that it was time to begin looking at existing land use ordinances for the City of Huntington. This included the now outdated Comprehensive Plan. It was decided that a new City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan should be written and adopted prior to approval of any major ordinances that address growth and development.

In 2009, the comprehensive planning process was again initiated in order to develop a new comprehensive plan. It was outlined that within two years, the plan would be completed and adopted. After a strong start to the process, resources were shifted to other priorities and the impacts of the economic recession, anticipated Census results, along with other items, temporarily stalled the process. In January of 2011, the City Plan Commission decided it was once again time to reinstate work on the plan and finish drafting a new vision for the future of Huntington in anticipation of an economic recovery and subsequent eventual growth cycle. That finished document was titled as the 2012 Comprehensive Plan.

That current Comprehensive Plan for the City of Huntington was originally adopted on September 11, 2012 by Common Council Resolution 14-R-12. It was updated on August 9, 2016 by Common Council 9-R-16. That update was completed primarily to reflect growth of the City through a number of recently completed annexations. An important minor update as the City cannot effectively plan for new areas if the plan, specifically the Future Land Use maps do not account for those areas.



## C. Plan Navigation

The underlying purpose of this comprehensive plan is to provide a legal framework to shape growth and development within the City of Huntington. Indiana Code Title 36-7-4, 500 Series permits the establishment of a comprehensive plan. This allows municipalities to adopt planning documents that must address the following elements:

- A statement of objectives for the future development of the jurisdiction.
- A statement of policy for land use development of the jurisdiction.
- A statement of policy for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities.

This Comprehensive Plan strives to both meet and exceed these minimum requirements by placing a variety of relevant subject areas into holistic chapters within this document which address issues as defined by plan participants in addition to those items required by Indiana State Law. This comprehensive plan does more than simply address land use and zoning; it evaluates a broader range of integral issues that face the community.

### Plan Action

The City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan is an action oriented document to be utilized by local government officials, civic and community leaders, and the public. The plan starts with a broad vision for Huntington and it ends with action lists that are recommended to accomplish each individual vision element. Every chapter analyzes a different topic, creating a linked connection between identified goals and necessary routes to achieve them. Decisions, actions, and activities that transpire after the formal adoption of this plan should be evaluated to ensure that they are in fact consistent with this plan and its intent.

### Chapter Organization

Each chapter of this plan evaluates a specific focus or study area/topic. The content within each chapter is the result of an in-depth planning process. Information in each chapter follows a logical process starting with a large idea, followed by specific recommendations for implementation. Each individual chapter is guided by a vision statement found in the Chapter Vision portion of the plan. These statements provide an idealistic look into the future of Huntington. In order to achieve each vision, broad goals are established to guide the process with a set list of objectives for achieving each goal. The stated objectives target specific issues that relate to each of the goals. The stated issues are all strengths and weaknesses of each topic. The issues are even further clarified within the subchapter of each respective chapter. Finally, the findings are a result of both research and identification of the current study area/topic.

## D. Regional Context Study Area

The City of Huntington is located in northeastern Indiana, approximately 25 miles from Fort Wayne, the state's second largest city, and 96 miles from Indianapolis, the state capitol. The City is within 175 miles or less of other major cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Lansing, Cleveland, Columbus, and Louisville. The City has access to major thoroughfares (I-69 and US 24), a rail line (Norfolk & Southern), and air service (cargo, airline, and private aviation). The City was named after Samuel Huntington, incorporated in 1848 and serves as the county seat.

The heritage of Huntington lies in its agricultural history and diverse industrial background. Its location near Interstate 69 and at the crossroads of State Road 5, State Road 9, U.S. 24, and U.S. 224 offer the City of Huntington unique advantages for business, tourism, and economic development opportunities. The planning area covered by the City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan includes the corporate limits of the City, including one area that was added through "bubble" annexation. As of 2019, the City of Huntington was comprised of 9.14 square miles.



Source: Huntington GIS, 2019

## E. Population and Socio-Economics

### • Issues and Findings

Population statistics and demographic trends are principle factors that affect the land use patterns of communities, counties, regions, and states. The number of people, their age, the living arrangement in which they place themselves, the types of dwellings they occupy, and the places available in the community to find employment all play an integral part in the amount of land needed to accommodate these choices.

Socio-economics is the analysis of the combined social and demographic attributes of a population. The following subchapter provides an overview of the ethnicity, poverty levels, employment levels, and household incomes of Huntington. The goal of a socio-economic analysis is to understand the characteristics, traits, and preferences of residents so that future socio-economic development can be encouraged. Results can generally be determined by reviewing economic growth, job creation, and home ownership levels. By studying these factors in a historical perspective, the future needs of the community can be more specifically addressed.

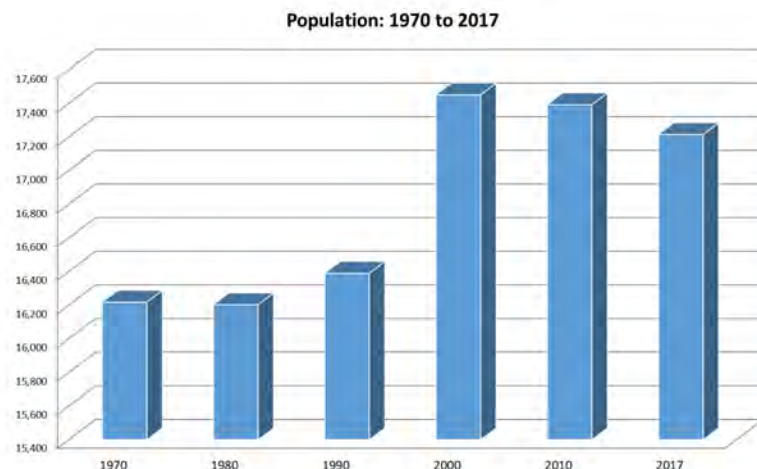
The City's population and related characteristics are an essential element of the comprehensive planning process. This chapter reviews the statistical trends of population and housing growth, in addition to emerging population projections. These projections can provide Huntington with a basis for considering future structural and public needs of the community. Data evaluated was taken from the U.S. Census Bureaus Decennial Census and American Community Survey datasets, and includes historical reviews of population changes when warranted.

The following subchapter will examine population data from the three most recent Census counts. This evaluation will be focused on the City of Huntington, but will also contain comparisons with Huntington County and the State of Indiana when deemed appropriate. Information contained in this analysis includes:

- 1990, 2000 & 2010 Decennial Census data
- 2016 & 2017 American Community Survey (1, 3, and 5 year) data
- Local, Huntington County, and State of Indiana data and projections

### Historical Population Trends

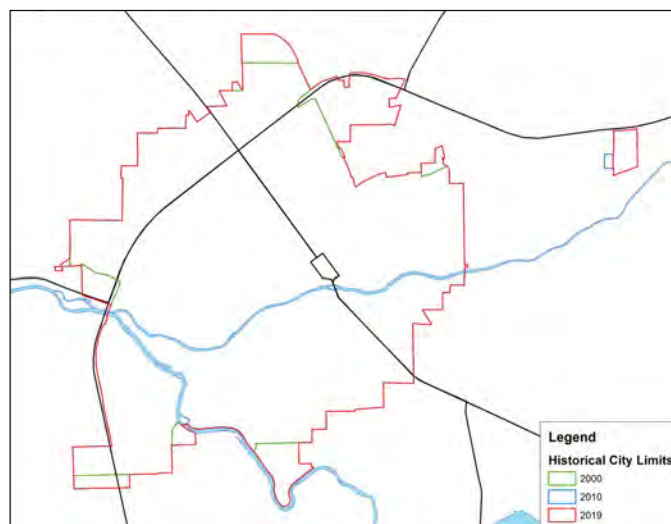
The American love for the automobile has been a constant feature of the 20th century and beyond. The creation and expansion of the Federal Interstate Highway System empowered people to begin to move outwards from concentrated city centers. Since the 1950's, this sprawling trend has accelerated growth along routes such as interstates and highways that caused vast amounts of land to be developed just outside of the urban core. This population location shift caused new development to encroach into easily accessible unincorporated areas located on urban fringes. Historically, the City of Huntington has experienced a growing population. Although the more recent modest gains from 1990-2017 (5.0%), can mostly be attributed to annexation. In the past seven years, there has only been an estimated 1.0% decrease in the population base (17,391 in 2010-17,214 in 2017), still despite a minimal loss, far more residents are estimated to have been annexed into the City in that same timeframe. These figures reinforce the notion that many people continue to leave urban living for suburban housing tracts.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970-2017 Census

### Land Area

The land area of the City of Huntington was 9.14 square miles in 2019, compared to 8.59 square miles in 2010, and 8.26 square miles in 2000 as shown in the map to the right. In the past nearly ten years, the land area of Huntington has increased by 6.4%, this increase can be attributed to the implementation and adherence of proactive growth policies which has given rise to an increase in voluntary annexations. The 2019 population density was estimated at 1,883 persons per square mile, a 4.7% decrease from the 2010 figure of 1,976 persons per square mile, and a greater decrease from 2000 figure of 2,077 persons per square mile. The decrease in density of population in persons per square mile reflects a trend towards lower density development growth and population migration to fringe areas.



City of Huntington Land Area, 2000, 2010 & 2019

### Population by Age

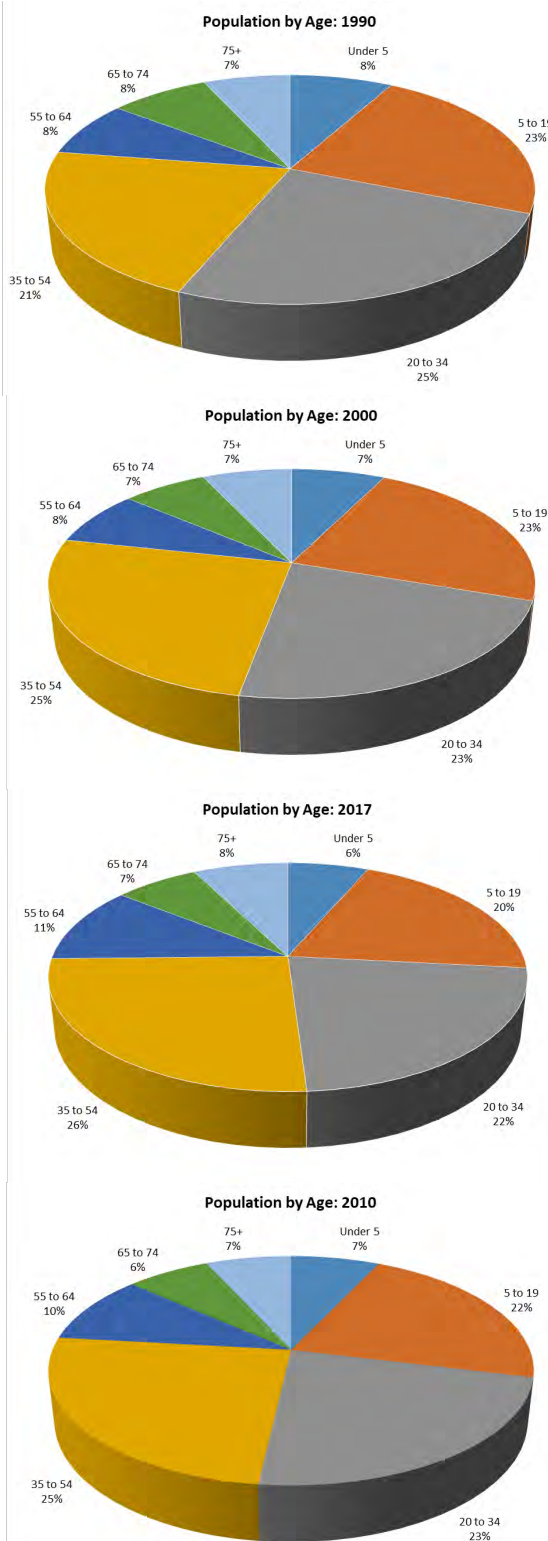
While knowing how many people call Huntington home is important, knowing the individual age groupings of those residents is much more useful for planning purposes. The graphs to the right illustrate the population distribution from 1990 to 2017. The graphs displayed show several notable trends, including the peak from the Baby Boomer generation, which is not as predominate as would be expected. There is a very general downward slope towards the older age categories and a complementary slope at the opposite end of the age spectrum as it relates to youth categories. The largest population composition can be found in the young professionals and middle-age groups. Life expectancy in the United States continues to increase as depicted in the graphs over time.

These overall trends have an impact on multiple aspects of development. Currently Baby Boomers are largely of retirement age, with most of them retiring between 2011 and present. The disposable income of this group creates significant demand for commercial real estate due to their economic activity. As expected in the time since Baby Boomers had begun to retire, there has been an increase in development of additional housing options available to them and those older than them. That in turn frees up housing options for younger generations as they become first time home buyers.

### Age

In Huntington, 58% of the overall population is estimated to be within the ages of 19-64. That figure is up significantly since 2010 when 36% of the population fell into that group. The senior population of over 65 years of age accounts for 14% of the population, a 1% increase from 2010 figures. The remaining 26% of the 2017 population are estimated to be minors, a 1% decrease from 2010 population figures, reinforcing the notion that childbirth in Huntington, like the rest of the country, continues to decline.

The age makeup of the total population is also shown in the charts to the right, with the largest population group remaining the 35-54 age group. Historically, these population distributions have remained consistent. With this uneven age distribution, favoring an older population, Huntington will continue to face older population needs in the next 10-30 years.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990-2017 Census



### Ethnicity

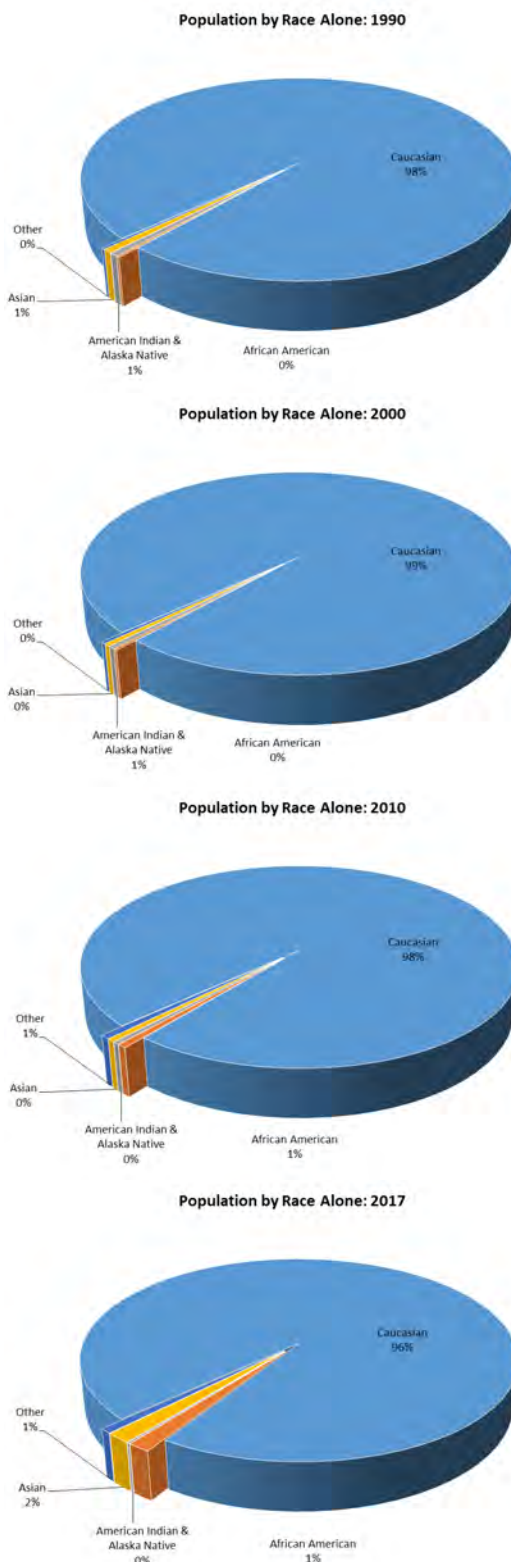
The racial diversity of the population of Huntington is mostly comprised of people of Caucasian background, 96% as estimated by 2017 Census figures. This figure is similar to the count for Huntington County as a whole and well above that of the State of Indiana at 84%. The second largest ethnic background for residents of the City of Huntington is black or African American at 1.5%, a slight gain from 2010 when that race represented less than 1% of Huntington's population. In all, the ethnic makeup of Huntington has remained similar in the last thirty plus years, as Huntington has little ethnic diversity. This lack of ethnic diversity is not uncommon for the State of Indiana nor other similarly sized Midwestern communities where minority populations have never existed in significant amounts.

### Annexation and Population

Annexation is the legal term for the process by which municipalities grow. Municipal boundaries are drawn to encompass populations which require improved governmental services. Because of shifts in population to the fringes of a municipality and the location of commercial, industrial and retail development in areas adjacent to a municipality, it becomes necessary from time to time to redraw the municipal boundaries to appropriately provide essential municipal services to those areas

Since its incorporation as a local unit of government, the City of Huntington has expanded outwards. Population trends illustrate a migration from the core of the City to outside fringe areas surrounding the City, primarily to the north. Annexation efforts have not historically kept pace with this outward migration, although recent gains have been made since the original drafting of this plan. It is expected that these growth trends will continue for the City of Huntington as relaxed land use and development standards just beyond the City's border favor residential sprawl and the conversion of agricultural land for such.

Post-war rural housing areas are beginning to feel the long-term effects of growth as septic systems have begun to fail in large numbers. With no available land left for new septic installation, regional sewer districts have become more prevalent in recent years. It is worth noting that the Huntington County Comprehensive Plan 2040 includes a goal of discouraging sprawl, however it will take policy changes and a firm commitment to that notion before sprawling trends can be stabilized.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990-2010 Census

### Income and Employment

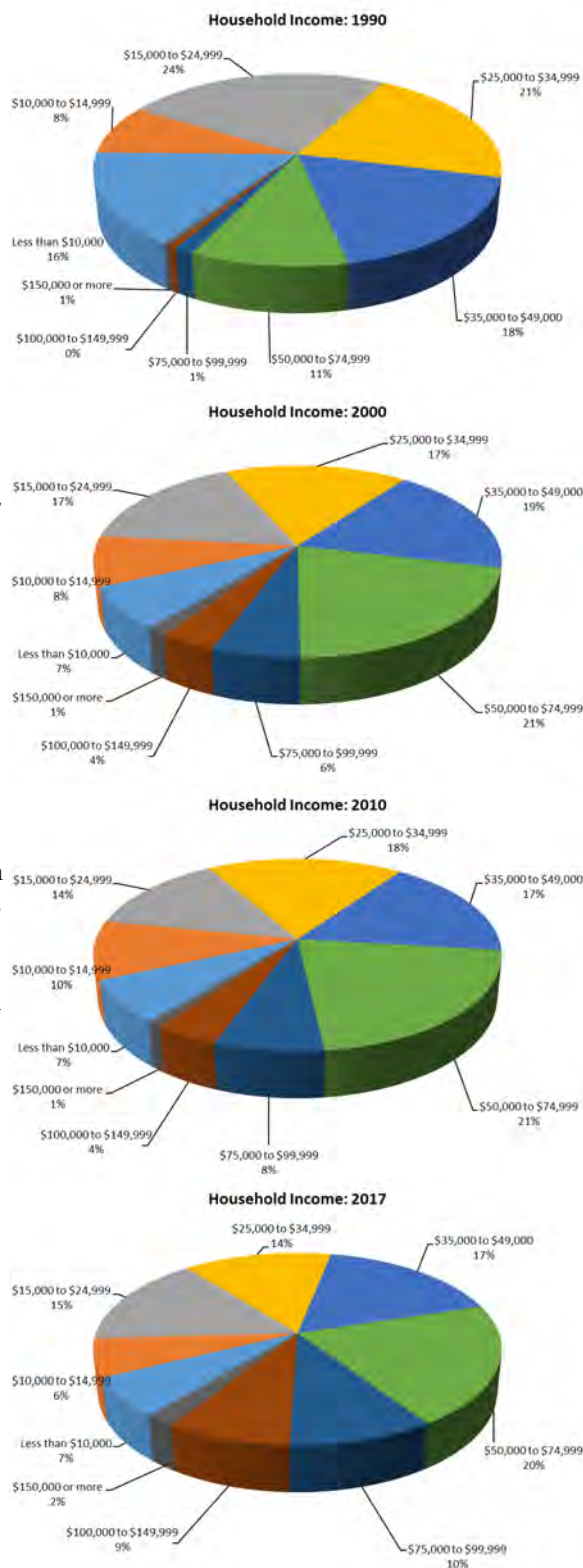
The employment levels and household income of a community reflect its general economic health. These figures provide information on how Huntington compares to Huntington County and the State of Indiana.

### Household Income

According to the 2017 American Community Survey by the US Census, the median household income for the City of Huntington was \$42,302. Comparatively, the median household income for the State of Indiana was \$52,182 for that same period. In 2010 Huntington's median household income was \$35,647, representing an 18.7% increase from 2010 to 2017 and a 0.1% increase from 2000 to 2010. These figures represent an overall 18.8% increase from 2000 to 2017. The most recent Census figures indicated that most (51.2%) households within the City of Huntington have a total income between \$25,000 and \$74,999. The largest percentage of household income (20.4%) falls in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range, above the median household income level.

Income levels have a significant impact on local housing demand. The income of an individual or household has the greatest impact on the housing choices that an individual will make. The median household income for the City of Huntington for 2000 Census and 2010 American Community Survey show that median incomes experienced almost no growth in that time period. This can mostly be attributed to the impacts of the recent economic recession and the margin of error associated with the American Community Survey which was utilized in the absence of 2010 Census data. However, household income gains from 2010 to 2017 show measured improvement, a sign of prosperous economic times.

In all, the results show that a large percentage of Huntington's population is within the moderate income categories, a nod to Huntington's long history as a blue collar community for most families.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 & 2000 Census, 2010 & 2017 ACS

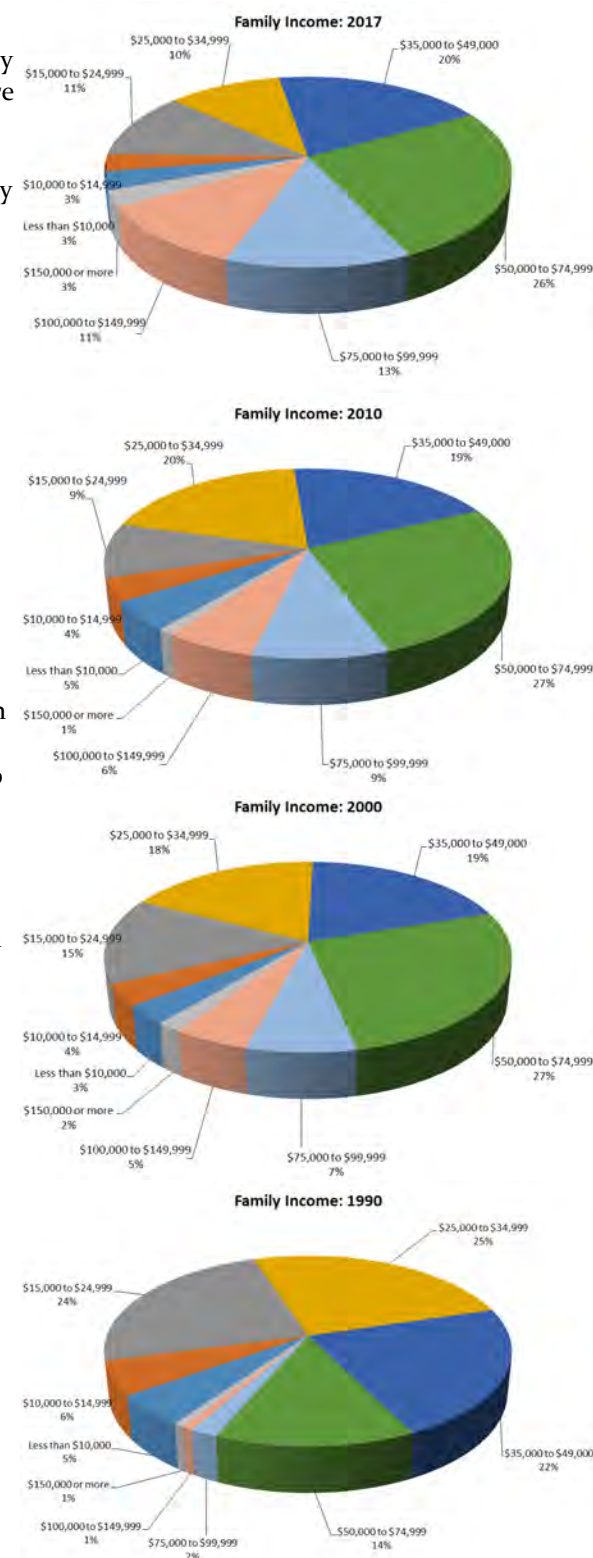
### Household vs. Family

Households and families are basic units of analysis, however they are not the same thing. A household is composed of one or more people who occupy a housing unit. Not all households contain families. Under the U.S. Census Bureau definition, family households consist of two or more individuals who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption, although they may also include other unrelated people. Non-family households consist of people who live alone or who share their residence with unrelated individuals, such as roommates.

### Family Income

Figures from the 2017 American Community Survey show that the City of Huntington median family income in 2017 was \$51,457. The median family income for the State of Indiana was \$65,227, approximately 26.8% more than Huntington. In 2010 median family income in Huntington was \$43,397. In 1990, this figure was \$31,040 and \$43,454 in 2010. The most recent seven year period shows an 18.6% increase which is of similar gains to that of median household income.

The most recent figures indicate that most (58%) families within the City of Huntington have a family income between \$35,000 and \$99,999. In 2010 the largest income segment was \$25,000 to \$74,999, this represents an improvement in the area of wage growth. The single largest percentage of family income (25.9%) is within the \$50,000 to \$74,999 category, which was the same for Census 2010 and 2000 figures. Much like household income, these figures highlight the gains made since the Great Recession as jobs have become abundant and wages have risen as a result of the competitive employment market.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 & 2000 Census, 2010 & 2017 ACS

### Employment Status

Unemployment rates for the City of Huntington and Huntington County were below that of the State of Indiana as of 2017. Statistics from 2010 represent near peak unemployment rates during the Great Recession. The table to the right lists available unemployment rates for the City of Huntington, Huntington County, and the State of Indiana based upon Census 2000 & 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey estimates as well as November 2018 (seasonally adjusted) figures from the Department of Workforce Development. It is widely understood that all geographies are currently at full employment and those members of the labor force who are not working at the present time are largely considered unemployable for a variety of reasons.

Unemployment Status				
	2000	2010	2017	2018
City of Huntington	4.9%	11.1%	3.2%	N/A
Huntington County	3.8%	10.9%	2.5%	3.8%
State of Indiana	4.9%	10.8%	3.9%	3.6%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 & 2010 Census, 2017 ACS  
November 2018 Dept. Workforce Development

### Poverty

Poverty rates of the City of Huntington have changed marginally over the past seven years. Most of this, like other disparities, can be traced to the impacts of the Great Recession and failure of wages to keep pace with inflation over time. The number of families living in poverty has decreased 4.5%, while married couple families have risen over 10.8%. Poverty status among all people has experienced the least amount of change, only increasing by approximately 1.8%. Those living in poverty under 18 years old has decreased 1.2%. As a whole, the number of citizens living in poverty has slightly improved since the recession.

Poverty Status				
	2000	2010	2017	7-year change
All Families	5.5%	11.1%	10.6%	-4.5%
Married couple families	2.3%	7.4%	8.2%	10.8%
Female householder, no husband present	19.2%	24.5%	23.9%	-2.4%
All people	8.1%	16.6%	16.9%	1.8%
Under 18 years	9.4%	24.1%	23.8%	-1.2%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census, 2010 & 2017 ACS

### Household Types

Much like the family makeup, the types of households which comprise the City of Huntington are changing as well. In the past seven years, the City has seen traditional family units (married couples and married couples with children) stabilize - a common trend with the decrease in child birth rates. Family households with their own children under 18 has increased 42.7%. Female head of households with no husbands present have decreased 8.7%, while data is unavailable for those female heads of household with children. Non-family households represent the largest decrease (9.7%) between the Census 2010 and ACS 2017 reporting period.

Household & Family Characteristics by Type				
	2000	2010	2017	7-year change
Family households with own children under 18	2,250	1,993	1,994	0.1%
Married couple family	3,284	2,969	3,047	2.6%
With own children under 18	1,520	1,247	1,779	42.7%
Female householder, no husband present	836	875	799	-8.7%
With own children under 18	537	541	N/A	N/A
Non-family households	2,300	2,639	2,382	-9.7%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census, 2010 & 2017 ACS



## F. Historical Context

The following information and photos were taken from the *Huntington County Interim Report, 2nd Edition*:

A number of Indian Villages once dotted the area which is now Huntington County, Indiana. The proximity of rivers and streams and an abundance of wild game made this area very attractive to the Miami Indians. Historians have described the Miami's as one of the largest, most civilized, and powerful of all North American tribes. Their great chief, Little Turtle, at the Treaty of Greenville, described Miami landholdings which would include all of the present state of Indiana, the western part of Ohio, and the eastern part of Illinois.

The principal Miami chief, Jean Baptiste Richardville (Peshewa or Wild Cat), ruled the tribe from 1816 until his death in 1841. In 1831 Chief Richardville moved the tribal capital from Kekionga (now Fort Wayne) to the Forks of the Wabash in what is now Huntington County in response to encroaching white civilization. In 1832 the U.S. Government ordered the construction of a mill for the chief on Rock Creek. A year later Richardville had a frame house built at the Forks which served as his home and tribal headquarters. The house was later the home of Richardville's son-in-law and successor, Chief Francis LaFontaine (Topeah). Nearby is the Old Treaty Grounds where significant treaties were signed with the U.S. Government in 1834, 1838, and 1840.



*Looking up Jefferson Street from the Courthouse in 1911, photo by R. Will Hubbell*

Along the Wabash (from the Indian name Wah-bah-shik-ki which the French spelled Quabache) River are two high ridges – the banks of an ancient river 11,000 years old. A large portion of the ridges are wooded – a remnant of the dense, impenetrable wilderness which once covered the entire area. An early map of the area identifies a trail which ran along the Wabash from Huntington to Fort Quiatenon and on to Fort Vincennes. In 1682 LaSalle described this as the shortest route from Lake Erie to the Mississippi River.

Significant to the area's history is the long portage from the Maumee River in Fort Wayne to the Wabash; it has been described by historians as the most important crossing point in North America. Connecting the Great Lakes region with the Mississippi Valley, it was crucial from both an economic and military standpoint. The first white men to enter the area were explorers, missionaries, and fur traders who traveled up the river in pirogues laden with flour, bacon, whiskey, trinkets, and other articles to exchange with the Indians for furs.

For a number of years the Indian Payment Grounds were located near the Forks. Here large numbers of Indians gathered to receive their annual allotment from the government for lands sold in treaty agreements. The first agricultural school for Indians in the western frontier was established near the western border of the county in 1805 by a group of Quakers. The project was initiated by Little Turtle who had journeyed east on several occasions to enlist the support of Presidents Washington, Adams, and Jefferson. The school was destroyed during the War of 1812.

1828 saw the arrival of the first known white settler, Artemus Woodworth, who built his cabin on the bluffs along the Wabash River. Earlier settlement of this area was delayed by the Indian's reluctance to relinquish their tribal lands. The land passed from Indian ownership with the Treaty of Paradise Springs in 1826 and Huntington County was officially organized on May 5, 1834. It is rectangular in shape, contains some 384 square miles and has a unique combination of scenic beauty in its rolling hills, highly productive farmland, and significant historical heritage.

In 1847 the present boundaries of twelve townships were established and the commissioners chose a county seal which includes a sheaf of wheat, a plow, a harrow, a rake and a pitchfork. An early settlement of Quakers in 1837 in what is now northern Dallas Township lent a touch of culture to the frontier with a traveling library and a popular Lyceum series.

A grand celebration marked the opening of the Wabash and Erie Canal from Fort Wayne to Huntington on July 3, 1835. The canal attracted settlers to the area and furnished local farmers with the first opportunity to ship grain for sale in distant ports. There were three locks in the town of Huntington and four more in the county. A lengthy portion of the old canal bed is still visible along U.S. 24 west of Huntington as well as an old aqueduct which once carried canal waters over Silver Creek.

In 1846 the Miami Indians' long history in the state ended as they were loaded on canal boats at the Forks of the Wabash and shipped to west Kansas. The 1840's saw the first surge of settlers, coming primarily from Ohio and Pennsylvania. The majority of the population was of German descent with a few Irish who came as canal workers and remained in the county with their families. A large number of German families came from Stark and Tuscarawas Counties in Ohio and established a "German Settlement" in northwestern Dallas Township. Here, in 1851, they organized a German Evangelical church and in 1887 built a brick schoolhouse.



*A horse drawn fire wagon leaving the original fire house at the corner of Cherry and State streets.*

In 1855, the arrival of the first train marked the beginning of an era in which railroads played a prominent part, with both the Wabash and Erie lines establishing shops within the county. From the 1850's through the Civil War period, Huntington County experienced political dissension. While some Huntington residents are credited with rendering assistance on the Underground Railroad, the city was also the home of Lambdin P. Milligan, a prominent attorney and state's rights advocate. In 1864 Milligan was arrested and taken to Indianapolis where he was tried and found guilty of treason. A last minute pardon from Secretary of War Edwin Stanton saved him from hanging. Upon his release Milligan took his case to the Supreme Court which ruled in *Ex Parte Milligan* that it was unlawful for a military court to try a civilian if the civilian courts were functioning. A historical marker stands on the lawn of the Huntington County Courthouse as a mute testimony to a case which received national attention.

The Civil War also prompted the beginning of a town. In 1869 the residents of Polk Township collected \$500 to erect a monument to honor local men who had fought in the War. A white marble shaft was erected and engraved, surrounded by a neat iron fence. In the ensuing years a small town grew up beside the monument and acquired the obvious name of Monument City. Although never attaining actual city status, it survived until the construction of the Salamonie Reservoir in 1965 when the monument was relocated to higher ground.

An abundance of limestone deposits led to the establishment of as many as thirty-five lime kilns in the county at one time. In 1875, 617,000 bushels of lime were shipped out of the numerous quarries along the Little River, earning for Huntington the nickname of “Lime City.” In the 1890’s oil was discovered in the southern part of the county. The promise of prosperity became reality for some landowners who had wells producing as many as 200 barrels per day. The oil boom triggered the growth of the town of Warren as well as several others, now gone.

The present Huntington County Courthouse was constructed in 1906. Designed by the Vincennes architect J.W. Gaddis, it is one of the most beautiful buildings in the area, with ornate neo-classic facades. The interior of the building contains a number of hand-painted murals depicting scenes of the county’s early history, three stained glass domes, and hand-stenciled ceiling decorations. A large eagle mosaic, in the center of the lobby floor, is of Italian tile and was installed by an artist from Sicily.

Over the years many changes have taken place in Huntington County. The Miami council fires have long been extinguished, the virgin timber has been cut, and the large populations of native fauna have disappeared; but the memories remain in the pride of its citizens in their special heritage.



*Huntington Light and Power plant located along West State Street adjacent to the Little Wabash River.*

## G. Planning Process

Planning as a whole is a process through which a community defines its future ideal character and the quality of life to be enjoyed by its residents. All future decisions in regards to land use, transportation, and expansion of community facilities are based upon the approved policies outlined in this Comprehensive Plan. Without complete coordination, the development of land beyond the capacities of which the City can provide for can result in failure to meet the demand for services that would support such growth. This planning process was established as a guide in defining the City of Huntington's mission and vision statement, goals, objectives, and plans for its future.

The overall process of developing the original 2012 Comprehensive Plan was comprised of a series of steps including: developing the scope of work, performing research and analysis, meeting participation, and other activities that supported the development of the goals and objectives contained within this document. The basis of gathering input to create this document centered around participation in Steering Committee meetings and other public meetings of the Plan Commission. Participation in the Steering Committee was solicited by the Plan Commission, City Administration, and local community stakeholders who voiced an interest in participating. The Steering Committee met on a regular basis to discuss and provide comments on the analysis, planning and visioning parts of the plan. The committee was established to represent a wide cross-section of the community, with representation from residents, businesses, social and civic groups, local agencies, and elected officials. Involvement of the committee included regular participation in group meetings, discussion of land use issues, regulatory controls, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, parks and recreation, community facilities, housing, and other needs of the community.

Drafts of the plan were compiled by the Steering Committee and approved by the Plan Commission after a draft publishing and public comment period before hearing all comments at a public hearing. The final approved version was then presented to the City Council for their subsequent unanimous adoption of the formal Comprehensive Plan and use of the plan as a document to aid in their decision making process.

The Plan's 2019 update process was a much more streamlined process. The Plan Commission, along with assistance from staff drafted careful updates to each section of the plan, including maps and data as applicable. The implementation matrix was also updated, providing information as to which items had been completed since 2012, showing progress on the implementation of the plan. Upon compilation of the updates, the Plan Commission held a public hearing to solicit citizen comments. The resulting comments were then evaluated and adjustments were made to the update as appropriate. While much of the format and basic information of the plan remains the same since 2012, the updates herein reflect relevant changes that have occurred in the community in the past seven years.



*One of a number of public hearings held regarding the original 2012 Comprehensive Plan*



## H. General Land Use Planning Objectives

Land use plans are formal recommendations for the future use of land and serve to guide the type of development that should occur on individual pieces of land. The use of land defines the economic, social, and physical impacts that it will ultimately have on the community. Land use patterns and how those patterns impact other land uses must be complimentary of the overall vision of the community in order to prevent conflicts between goals and aspirations. The pursuit of land use planning objectives is determined in order to direct future land use patterns in the most positive manner, which is consistent with the optimum long-term interests of the community. The land use planning process has typically been a four-step process:

1. Inventory of current land uses
2. Public input and analysis of existing land use inventory
3. Synthesis of information in plan alternatives
4. Creation of the individual land use plan recommendations into the comprehensive land use plan

By defining the appropriate uses of land within the City of Huntington, long term decisions by individuals, businesses, and the City will be facilitated and planned in conjunction. Huntington's land use planning general objectives were developed in order to address the following target goals:

- Preserve and enhance existing neighborhood, business, and industrial districts.
- Preserve and enhance scenic qualities along major roadways and gateways to the City of Huntington so that they are improved and maintained in order to project the highest quality image to visitors.
- Ensure that all development is compatible with the scale and character of the adjacent uses within the area.
- Promote the redevelopment of areas to encourage the renovation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of existing structures.
- Continue to promote orderly development.
- Balance the allocation of space to various land uses which meet the social, physical, and economic needs of the community.
- Ensure that new and existing residential areas are attractive in appearance.
- Promote residential development that protects existing neighborhoods.
- Encourage residential cluster development that provides for neighborhood scale commercial opportunities within close proximity.
- Promote a high quality of life within residential neighborhoods.
- Provide a range of housing types and densities in order to preserve the long-term needs of the city.
- Promote participation in programs which redevelop and renew older residential areas.
- Ensure that new and existing commercial developments are attractive in appearance.
- Provide for the development of new commercial areas of both a neighborhood and community scale.
- Encourage the clustering of compatible, but differing uses of commercial type development, including traditional commercial, retail, and office buildings in innovative campus like "parks".
- Maintain and enhance the character of existing commercial areas.
- Promote the redevelopment and infill of existing underutilized commercial areas.
- Continue to attract new industrial uses on the periphery of the community.
- Maintain the existing industrial base while fostering the development of more advanced high-tech industries in order to diversify the overall industrial base.
- Encourage the clustering of compatible but differing uses of industrial type development, including traditional industry, laboratory, testing, research, fabrication, and assembly in developed industrial parks.

- Provide diversified recreational opportunities for city residents in a variety of sizes and locations within existing and future development.
- Encourage all development to be compatible with and sensitive of natural and man-made resources of the community.
- Protect the environmental and cultural value of the City of Huntington.
- Encourage the preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development.
- Establish a unified open space and greenway network that connects city parks, floodplains, and areas along selected corridors and bicycle and pedestrian ways.
- Protect historic resources from deterioration or loss.
- Ensure that future land uses are appropriate in terms of location, access, and availability of infrastructure in order to avoid unnecessary cost burden on the City of Huntington.
- Maintain and enhance an organized system of roadways and other public infrastructure.
- Promote the location of community facilities in areas compatible for their use and which are accessible to the public to be served.
- Achieve growth and development, guided by this plan, which is consistent with capital improvement plans and expenditures by the city.
- Encourage annexation in appropriate areas where it is fiscally beneficial to both the city and potential residents and where sufficient capacities exist.
- Maintain and create further tangible benefits that make it an appealing value for potential citizens to want to be a part of the City of Huntington, thereby promoting annexation.

## **I. Coordination with Other Plans and Reports**

One of the main objectives of this Comprehensive Plan is to both acknowledge and compliment the findings and recommendations of a number of other studies and reports prepared by both public and private agencies. The findings and key objectives of these documents have been integrated into this Comprehensive Plan when deemed appropriate and consistent with the vision of this document. Where applicable, data sources and other key findings have been updated to reflect current conditions.

Local plans examined and considered can be found listed below, only plans that were found to be relevant in the current context were incorporated into this document.

- City of Huntington Growth Potential Analysis, 1967
- Huntington County Sewer & Water Facilities Study, 1968
- The (City of) Huntington Comprehensive Plan, 1969
- Wabash River Heritage Corridor Plan, 1993
- Huntington County Tomorrow, 1994
- Huntington County Interim Report, 1997
- Region III-A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2003
- Huntington County Vision in Progress, 2004
- Huntington County Housing Needs Assessment, 2005
- City of Huntington Trails & Greenways Master Plan, 2007
- Huntington County School Speed Zone Study, 2009
- Huntington County Safe Routes to School Master Plan, 2010
- City of Huntington Long Term Control Plan, 2010
- City of Huntington Comprehensive Financial Plan & Process Evaluation, 2010

- City of Huntington Parks & Recreation Master Plan, 2011
- City of Huntington Downtown Visioning Study, 2012
- City of Huntington ADA Transition Plan, 2013
- Implementing Positive Change in Huntington, 2015
- Huntington University Facilities Master Plan, 2015
- NEIRP Road to One Million Plan, 2015
- City of Huntington Water Master Plan, 2015
- City of Huntington Sewer Master Plan, 2015
- Multi-Use Trails & Greenways of Huntington County, 2016
- City of Huntington Wellhead Protection Plan Phase II, 2017
- Huntington County Community Schools Demographic Study, 2017
- Huntington Consolidated Economic Development (TIF) Plan, 2017
- Huntington County 2040 Comprehensive Plan, 2018
- Huntington County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2018
- Northeast Indiana Regional Vision 2030 Plan, 2018
- City of Huntington Water Supply & Treatment Study, 2018
- Huntington Flood Response & Evacuation Plan, 2019
- Huntington Municipal Airport Capital Improvement Plan, 2020-2024





## II. COMMUNITY INPUT

*"The creative process involves getting input, making recommendation, getting critical review, getting more input, improving the recommendation, getting more critical review... again and again and again."*

*-Author Unknown-*



## A. Introduction

The leadership of the City of Huntington and efforts of the Steering Committee have been overwhelmingly essential in the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this document is to assist city officials in their future choices about the use of community land and resources while planning for the growth and development of the City of Huntington. Over the past several decades, the City of Huntington has experienced highs and lows of economic prosperity within the downtown, while seeing a steady growth of the existing industrial areas along U.S. 24. General commercial growth has been extremely prosperous on the northern edge of the city, while this type of growth along other established commercial corridors has been mostly static.



*Comprehensive Plan kick-off meeting January 20, 2011*

The City of Huntington began this comprehensive planning process in order to develop a long-term vision for the City that took into account a host of other plans and documents that established niche visions. This decision making document will allow the highlights of these separate ideas and endeavors to culminate into an overall vision. Beginning in 2011, the Huntington Countywide Department of Community Development assisted the City of Huntington Plan Commission and Steering Committee in creating a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Huntington.

City of Huntington residents were regularly involved in the preparation of this plan, in both formal and informal roles, participating in various meetings, and other information gathering activities. Public meetings were held in the Council Chambers of the City Building in downtown Huntington. At these meetings, pertinent issues were discussed in order to identify solutions and draft visions for the document. Staff from the Department of Community Development were present to facilitate these discussions and refine the information into items of consideration for the Steering Committee.

## B. Steering Committee

At the recommendation of the Plan Commission, a Steering Committee was established to oversee and guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Volunteers were solicited from the public to participate on the committee from those in attendance at the kick-off meeting held on January 20th, 2011. These members included representatives from the Plan Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, government, institutions, organizations, businesses, and citizens of the community. The main role of the Steering Committee was to actively contribute a diverse perspective of the ideas and needs of the city, while assisting in establishing a vision for the future of Huntington. The Steering Committee provided broad input into the Comprehensive Plan development. In addition to the Steering Committee, individuals representing interests to specific chapters of the plan were invited to provide further input in their area of expertise. Steering Committee members were the main participants in those meetings, helping to guide the process while coordinating public outreach and involvement that was conducted as part of the planning process.



The Steering Committee was charged with:

- Creating a Mission Statement and a Vision Statement for the plan.
- Defining preliminary Goals and Objectives.
- Creating strategies to identify community place and identity.
- Formulating input to guide future land use change.
- Identification of key issues and needs of the community.
- Working with stakeholders in identifying community issues.
- Finalizing a framework that would focus on improving community character and quality of life.



Steering Committee work involved participation in meetings that analyzed land use issues, future growth, development controls, transportation, infrastructure, parks and open space, community facilities, housing, and other community needs. This planning work served in developing a framework for the Comprehensive Plan and related implementation strategies.

The Steering Committee held regular meetings throughout the process. Several of the Steering Committee meetings were held in conjunction with monthly Plan Commission meetings. The committee temporarily suspended planning activities for a short period while awaiting the release of Census 2010 information. Meetings for drafting of the original pwere held on the following dates:

**2011**

- February 10th & 24th
- March 10th & 24th
- April 14th & 28th
- May 12th & 26th
- June 9th & 23rd
- July 14th & 28th
- August 11th & 25th
- September 8th & 22nd
- October 13th & 27th
- November 3rd & 17th
- December 1st

**2012**

- May 10th & 24th
- June 14th
- July 12th
- August 9th

The Plan Commission met on the following dates to complete the 2019 Comprehensive Plan update:

**2019**

- February 28
- March 28

## **B. Community Participation**

The comprehensive planning process spanned a period of approximately eighteen-months. It included the input of citizens and a wide variety of community leaders, the community input process was structured and conducted through a formalized process. Citizens and businesses were strongly encouraged to participate in the visioning and planning processes. The Steering Committee worked with staff facilitators from the Department of Community Development to develop a plan that included land use, in order to identify important issues in neighborhoods and the community as a whole. In addition, it also established goals and objectives for the City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan.

Basic community information and data, which outlined existing conditions was given to the Steering Committee in addition to educational materials that highlighted primary planning principles. In order to gather public opinion, participants in the process were asked to comment on various issues facing Huntington, including strengths, weaknesses, goals, and objectives to be considered in this plan. Under the leadership of these “citizen planners”, the Steering Committee’s various consensus-building activities were undertaken, including Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, focus groups, interviews, and group discussions. These activities lead to the development of draft mission and vision statements, draft goals, objectives, and recommendations, preliminary implementation strategies, and possible recommendations to bring positive change to the community, while preserving current assets. These various inputs were then assembled into draft chapter outlines by the staff facilitator and presented to the Steering Committee for review before consideration by the Plan Commission. A majority of the comments and input are reflected in the goals and objectives contained within this plan.

The community-based planning process of visioning typically followed these steps:

Profiling the existing community.

- Evaluating the impact of emerging trends and issues.
- Drafting a vision for the future.
- Developing a strategic action plan to achieve the vision.

Each step in the visioning process required distinct activities in order to bring about sufficient results. The entire process can be modified in various ways depending on a community’s overall goals, needs, and available resources. This visioning process is most often as important as its end products. The best visioning efforts engage the entire community in working together towards a positive vision for their future.

Community input and strategizing offer endless benefits for the community, such as:

- Bringing community members together in a proactive way.
- Envisioning new opportunities and possibilities for the future.
- Developing goals and strategies that can be benchmarked for change.
- Fostering citizen involvement in local government.
- Promoting visionary community leadership.
- Developing a broader foundation for planning and decision-making.
- Fostering new public/private partnerships for action.

## D. Educating Citizen Planners

The Steering Committee was comprised mostly of people with minimal planning background. The expertise of the Steering Committee members was diverse, with backgrounds in public policy, real estate, law, human services, economic development, marketing, engineering, construction, and community development represented. In order to prepare them for what to expect while serving on this committee, various educational materials were provided to them. Staff facilitators advised the committee members and other participants about various methods of effective participation. Prior to the meetings, members received an overview of general planning objectives, planning principles, land use, zoning, and the comprehensive planning process. This allowed members of the committee to become more versed in general land use planning principles.



## E. SWOT

One of the first activities undertaken by the Steering Committee and other participants was to perform a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) exercise. This process seeks to identify relevant issues that were representative of opinions held by the general population of Huntington. These concerns are important contributions that need to be addressed by either the Comprehensive Plan or related plans of a smaller scale, such as neighborhood plans or other topic specific plans. After individual responses were gathered, they were generalized to focus on broader issues and an analysis was performed on issues that were reoccurring among each participant. In 2019 the Plan Commission updated the SWOT elements to reflect present day community issues. Below is a summary of the updated results of the SWOT analysis:

### • Strengths

- Highway accessibility
- Workforce
- Downtown
- Library
- Parks & recreation
- Huntington University
- Municipal airport
- Railroad access
- Industrial base
- Education system
- Infrastructure
- Low cost of living
- Civic & religious activities
- Access to fiber optics
- Reservoirs & rivers
- Quality of life
- Public transportation
- Location advantage
- Small town atmosphere
- Hospital
- HCUD
- Chamber of Commerce
- Residents improved identity
- City/County partnerships
- Housing stock
- Business community
- Trail network
- Government center
- YMCA
- Newer schools
- Historical community
- Collaborative human services agencies
- Industrial greenfield sites
- Learning Center
- Regional coordination (NEIRP)

- **Weaknesses**

- Lack of vacant industrial buildings
- Southside development
- Aging housing stock
- Declining neighborhoods
- Aging commercial/industrial buildings
- Trail network connectivity
- Automotive industry reliance
- State Roads downtown
- Railroad downtown
- Overall image
- High paying jobs
- Retail/shopping
- Entertainment opportunities
- Aging population
- Declining tax base
- Youth opportunities
- Brownfield sites
- Absentee property ownership
- Appeal to young professionals
- Rental housing stock & quality
- Healthy lifestyles

- **Opportunities**

- Downtown revitalization
- High tech industry
- New industrial park & sites
- Brownfield sites
- Huntington University student retention
- Trail network
- Huntington as a destination
- Indoor sport facilities
- Highway accessibility
- Downtown parking
- Railroad access
- Fiber optics
- Location advantage
- Commercial building stock
- Historic housing stock
- City owned utilities
- Municipal airport
- Tourism
- Arts and culture
- Main Street Huntington
- Downtown residential uses
- HCED & Chamber of Commerce
- Young professionals
- State Roads downtown
- Low cost of living
- Recreational opportunities
- Proximity to reservoirs & Rivers
- Business Route 24
- Southside development
- Quality of life
- Citizen “buy-in”

- **Threats**

- Declining tax base/revenue
- Available jobs
- State and federal mandates
- Community involvement
- Proximity of schools
- Youth activities
- Resistance to change
- NIMBY outlook
- Low unemployment rates & adequate workforce
- Low paying jobs
- Tax rate
- Property tax caps
- Unskilled workforce
- Dependable workforce
- Loss of business/retail
- Loss of industry
- Downtown parking
- Housing availability & affordability
- Crime
- Attracting young professionals
- Declining Southside
- Cost of extending city services
- Loss of local businesses
- External image
- Impacts of opioid crisis

The top strengths of Huntington include its location, family friendly atmosphere, and other community amenities. Huntington has a strong sense of community; it reflects small town values and is an excellent place to raise a family. The unique and rich heritage, arts and cultural facilities, educational institutions, and vast community services are valuable strengths to build upon. These strengths are invaluable resources that can offer Huntington residents many opportunities for improving their quality of life.

Huntington's weaknesses are elements of the community that either currently detract or have the potential to detract from the overall community welfare. The greatest weaknesses of Huntington include insufficient amenities to support young professionals, a less than idea city image and identity, and decline of the housing stock in some older areas of the community.

Opportunities in Huntington or those elements that have potential to contribute to the community include: investment and job creation opportunities, economic partnering, and tourism. Huntington must continue to build upon its historical and cultural past while preserving greenspace and providing recreational opportunities. The city is in a position to become an economic leader for the region, when compared to communities of similar size.

Threats in Huntington, or barriers to success in the future are not extremely difficult to overcome. The list gathered from SWOT activities include several key concerns. Most of these threats revolve around the need for a more positive attitude of citizens regarding Huntington, attracting and retaining young professionals, improving educational attainment, building a skilled workforce, and increasing the available workforce through population attraction and growth.

## **F. Summary**

The community input process resulted in identifying the most important issues that the City of Huntington faces. Data collected from the various input gathering activities provided the Steering Committee with information about the key issues and reoccurring themes of the community. This allowed the committee to disseminate the information and apply that to the planning process as they proceeded with the drafting of the Comprehensive Plan. The Steering Committee frequently referred to the summary of community input information gathered.

Key issues as identified through community input were:

- Economic development
- Job creation & retention
- Physical appearance of the community as a whole
- Community services and resources
- Sense of community identity and pride

The key issues were translated into themes that convey aspirations for Huntington, including:

- Thriving economy
- Successful and high paying jobs
- Quality of life
- A vibrant city identity
- Sustainable neighborhoods



### III. CHAPTER VISIONS

*The **Mission Statement** is a statement of purpose for the City of Huntington that outlines an overall scope of its purpose through highlighting the values and priorities of the community. The **Vision Statement** reflects a shared expression of the community through its values and aspirations, while the **Chapter Vision Statements** define the expectations and direction of progress for the future. The following visions were crafted by the Steering Committee in order to clarify the mission of the City of Huntington and inspire everyone in the community as the future is crafted.*







## MISSION STATEMENT

*The City of Huntington will provide services and programs that encourage a community atmosphere and high quality of life for all of its residents, while preserving its history and enhancing economic sustainability. Huntington will promote a balanced mixture of residential and commercial development and further its image as a desirable, visually attractive, safe, and economically stable community. The City will continue to recognize the importance of community planning which provides for the optimum use of land and compatibility of land uses while preserving a sustainable built and natural environment.*





## VISION STATEMENT

*The City of Huntington strives to be a premier Midwestern community recognized for its superior business and industrial environment. The City is focused on education, culture, and its historic roots. Huntington will be a well planned city, known for its vibrant economy and aesthetically pleasing built environment. The City of Huntington and its residents will pledge a high standard of community planning as exhibited through their involvement in growth and development through which they intend to make a difference. The City values and strives to preserve its natural and architectural resources through sustainable development practices.*



## **A. City Identity and Image**

The City of Huntington strives to become one of the finest mid-sized cities of the Midwest, known as a desirable place to live, work and play. Renowned as a model City that has invested in its future, Huntington is a community that fosters economic growth. Residents maintain a healthy balance of employment, education, and culture through the wide array of amenities provided. The City is known as a center for arts and culture, and attracts tourism through its many popular destinations and events. Huntington celebrates its identity as a historic, small-town community with a true sense of place and offers convenient access to many regional destinations. The community is proud of its preserved historical image as displayed through its downtown and equally inspired by its context sensitive contemporary developments.

## **B. Government and Community Services**

The City of Huntington will continuously strengthen its government leadership and visions through a proactive role in its future growth. Huntington officials shall foster public trust and build upon existing public-private partnerships. Agencies are both accessible and responsive of citizen needs while adequately supporting existing residents and attracting new residents to the City. The City recognizes the importance of input from the public and seeks to integrate citizen ideas into the development of policies and activities. The City strives to be fiscally responsible in all endeavors and provides the highest quality services at the lowest possible cost. The City supports a system of community services which benefit its diverse population. Effective communication and cooperation between government, residents, businesses, agencies, and institutions shall perpetuate the high quality of life throughout the community.

## **C. Downtown**

The City of Huntington's downtown continues to evolve as its collective cultural center, offering citizens a unique experience in a vibrant mixed-use urban environment. Downtown contains a mixture of vibrant architecture displayed through historic buildings and infill development that contain retail and entertainment opportunities in the heart of the City. Interest in the downtown is fostered through promotion, public events, and unique opportunities. Downtown offers a walkable environment with many urban housing options situated among accessible streets, restaurants and other amenities. It is an area known for its visual qualities, well-maintained properties, and aesthetically pleasing walkable streetscape.

## **D. Economic Development**

The City of Huntington will work cooperatively with its local, regional, and state partners to vigorously promote quality economic development to new and existing businesses through entrepreneurial support/development, expansion, job retention, and skilled job creation. Economic Development is fostered by the locational advantage of Huntington, which offers connectivity to regional markets and its sound economic incentives. Economic development is supported by expedited and responsive cooperation and communication among government officials, related agencies, businesses, and residents in the pursuit of investment opportunities. A wide variety of sustainable employment opportunities are provided to the citizens of Huntington in addition to job training and continuing education opportunities.

## **E. Education**

The City of Huntington shall continue its philosophy that education is our future and it empowers citizens as individuals and thereby benefits the entire community. Huntington will continue to provide and support existing life-long learning opportunities that complement the commitment to provide for a brighter tomorrow through education accessible to all ages and vocations. Effective and diverse educational opportunities are supported by quality facilities and high standards that offer access to emerging technologies, resources, and equipment. Huntington, in conjunction with its exemplary collection of public and private schools and institutions of higher education will work together to raise the expectations for the future.

## **F. Transportation**

The City of Huntington strives to have a sufficiently integrated network of transportation systems that are comprised of road networks, public transit, and alternative transportation options that possess current carrying capacity and the ability to support future growth. The multi-modal transportation systems allow residents and visitors expedited access to employment, shopping, recreation, entertainment, and other destinations in a safe and efficient manner. The overall transportation network offers minimal adverse impacts to the natural or built environment and neighborhoods, while promoting healthy lifestyles among all citizens. The City of Huntington shall continue to evaluate the effectiveness of its transportation systems with the health and safety of its citizens and visitors as a primary concern.

## **G. Housing**

The City of Huntington recognizes the need to promote clean, safe, affordable, and attractive housing options for its citizens of varying socio-economic status. The existing housing stock shall be well maintained, while new housing will be designed to match the context of the existing community. The historic neighborhoods of the community are valued assets and integrated housing development shall be situated in a manner that is sensitive to existing residential aesthetics.



## **H. Parks and Recreation**

The City of Huntington understands the need to establish and maintain clean, safe and economically feasible recreational opportunities to its residents and visitors. The City aspires to be known for its wide variety of comprehensive recreational amenities through the valuation, preservation, and protection of its beautiful natural habitats, parks, and greenspace resources. The City will recognize the connectivity of parks and other recreational areas as an important part of its development philosophy.

## **I. Sustainability and Preservation**

The City of Huntington will continue to treasure its local historical, cultural, and natural resources including its buildings, artifacts, rivers, wetlands, streams, geology, water resources, and woodlands. Huntington pledges to protect and preserve these resources with environmentally sound planning that recognizes a sustainable development philosophy that considers potential impacts on these resources prior to development.

## **J. Land Use**

The City of Huntington seeks to implement a comprehensive land use strategy that is balanced and provides for a community of thriving neighborhoods, business districts, and civic places that create a high quality of life and physical environment. The city intends to expand in a manner that conserves natural resources and integrates new development in order to minimize negative impacts. As the City of Huntington grows outward, it will also continue to grow inward through redevelopment and reinvestment in vacant, aging, and underutilized areas. Downtown Huntington will continue to be home to the city's government, professional, niche retail, cultural, and entertainment center. Walkable neighborhood commercial areas will be promoted, pedestrian and bicycle connections will be emphasized; industrial and office development will be a priority in areas identified as well suited for these uses; traditional development and clustered patterns of new development will be encouraged where appropriate, culminating in a long-term sustainable growth philosophy for the City of Huntington.





#### IV. CITY IMAGE AND IDENTITY

*"Sense of place is the sixth sense, an internal compass and map made by memory and spatial perception together."*

*-Rebecca Solnit-*



## A. Introduction

The unique character of Huntington is the visual personality that defines the City. The fringe, corridors, neighborhoods, heart, and other areas of the community help to shape the overall character of Huntington. The appeal of Huntington is grounded in its history through the various collections of architectural styles in its downtown, neighborhoods, public buildings, and institutions such as the campus of Huntington University. The members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee have pledged that the preservation of these cultural assets is very important to the character and image of Huntington. The value of these unique areas should be further protected through the implementation of development standards that allow for the duplication of these amenities and other structures that will further compliment them.



*The campus of Huntington University*

The image of Huntington is a visual collection of memories that residents and visitors recall or use to describe to others the overall experience that is Huntington, Indiana. The image has the possibility to be positive or negative, but is typically a mixture of the two perspectives. It is in the best interest of Huntington to develop and maintain a positive image for the purpose of marketing, goodwill, and pride that becomes infectious among its residents.

The first impressions that visitors have about a community are often closely linked with the entry gateways at the corporate boundaries leading into the community. Often, the opportunity to present a welcoming gesture in these areas is driven by the availability of public land where welcome signage can be installed. Other developed points of interest such as landmarks, parks, institutions, and public buildings also serve as important elements in forming a community image. However, the impacts of private development can play an important role in determining the image of the City because of its influence on the location, quality of architecture, and built environment elements such as signage, lighting, and site design.

The major entry points into the City of Huntington need to project a positive, attractive, and welcoming visual appeal. These points should be visually and physically enhanced in order to convey a sense of community pride. The City should collaborate when possible with agencies and private businesses in order to complete these image building enhancements.

Downtown Huntington is arguably the most identifiable landmark within the City. This central business district contains shops and venues all along main street routes, a collection of churches and public buildings flanked by historic neighborhoods, which together help to define the City's image. The colors, materials, architecture, public spaces, and sense of place help to establish this highly recognizable district. Major businesses and institutions all contribute to the larger image that is projected on a national and worldwide scale. A positive image and unique brand identity for Huntington symbolizes the value of the City and quality of life that one can expect from living and working in Huntington. The aesthetic appeal of the community contributes to the sustained economic growth of the region by conveying a positive message to existing and new businesses that look to call Huntington home.

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

- **Goals**

1. Utilize existing districts, gateways and corridors to showcase the community in a positive, inviting, and attractive manner that encourages new, appropriate, and imaginative development that will positively impact Huntington's unique sense of place.

- **Objectives**

1. Enhance the perception of Huntington through creative image building on multiple fronts.
2. Recruit agencies and organizations within Huntington for an image building/branding campaign to be spearheaded by the Visitors and Convention Bureau of Huntington County.
3. Develop pride and ownership for the various districts and places within the city through community buy-in and support of the image building/branding campaign.
4. Utilize existing primary gateway welcoming elements to create a unified design to implement at other gateways of key locations.
5. Develop graphic identity and wayfinding signage for the city that incorporates multiple districts in a coordinated and creative information system.
6. Support public and private initiatives that seek to build consensus, foster cooperation, and give back to the community in a manner which improves its overall image.
7. Further develop key corridors in the community as unique areas that create interest and foster investment.
8. Encourage sustainable design principles to further develop the identity and image of Huntington in a progressive manner that lends itself to a forward thinking, environmentally conscious, and progressive development philosophy.



## C. Districts

### • Issues and Findings

Districts are distinguishable areas of the city that are recognized through the collection of buildings, architecture, landmarks, or overall sense of place they invoke. These areas can also be attributed to hosting certain functions or events that are commonly known throughout the region. The City of Huntington has a number of commercial areas and residential areas that have evolved over time as informal districts. These areas have remained primary identifiers among residents, as it is how they convey locations within the City to both residents and visitors. More formalized secondary districts exist through areas that have received special designation or are unique locations within Huntington. Most of these areas are historic in nature and feature older residential neighborhoods or early commercialized areas that were hubs of activity in the early 1900's. The identified informal primary districts of Huntington include:

#### North Side

This district continues to see increased pressure in the conversion of residential and undeveloped properties to commercial uses. This leads to increased traffic flows in adjacent residential areas. The North Side district contains some of Huntington's most prominent and historically rich neighborhoods. Secondary districts, including the Hawley Heights National Register District and a majority of the North Jefferson Street National Register District can be found here. This district also contains a high proportion of public parkland and landmarks such as Huntington North High School.



*Sunken Gardens, a landmark in the North Side District*

#### East Side

The East Side district contains a mixture of land uses and once housed some of Huntington's first industries. The residential areas in this district contain some of the lowest property values in Huntington. The mixture of incompatible uses and low property values continues to decrease desirability which serves as a barrier to new growth and development. This district contains part of the Old Plat National Register District, a secondary district rich in historic attributes. Residents in this district experience a high level of location identity and unity, making this area prime for neighborhood level engagement activities. Landmarks of this district include the drive-in theater, Huntington Fire Department Station No. 1, the former HK Porter facility and the First Street corridor.

#### South Side

This district, once a heavy commercial area, has seen minimal development in recent years. The district remains fairly balanced in commercial and residential land uses, with a light mixture of older industrial uses that have existed for decades. This district was once home to a large number of small local businesses and a very active independent business association. The district contains a number of primary and secondary corridors that are home to most of the commercial uses in the area. The southwest portion of this district has seen notable growth in recent years through new home construction in new subdivisions. The Drover Town National Register District, a historical secondary district, can be found on the south side. Some of the predominate landmarks within this district are Hier's Park, home to Huntington County's annual 4H fair, Horace Mann Elementary School, and Riverview Middle School.

**West Side**

The West Side district is the least dense portion of Huntington in terms of development. This district is home to Huntington's first formal industrial park and the point of convergence of the Wabash and Little Rivers. The district contains mostly commercial development in the northwestern part, but is primarily residential and institutional in its use. Recently, minimal development has caused growth in this district to remain static. Areas immediately surrounding the rivers remain undeveloped due to suitability. The Victory Noll/St. Felix Friary National Register District, a secondary district, makes up a substantial portion of this district. Several notable industrial, cultural, and recreational landmarks can be found within this district.



*The St. Felix Catholic Center in the West Side District*

**Downtown**

This district continues to experience recent revitalization thanks to a concerted effort by many groups. Downtown Huntington is the oldest part of the city and identified as the heart of the community by most residents. The age and condition of the existing building stock, in combination with the level of urbanized build environment, requires substantial capital investment for new uses, which often serves as a barrier to changes in use. Due to the minimal amount of undeveloped land, this area is not prime for new growth and development, but is appealing for adaptive re-use. The Downtown district contains the Courthouse Square and part of the Old Plat National Register Districts, secondary districts of historical significance. Landmarks in the downtown are primarily government buildings or historic structures of which people recall their former uses.

**University / Hospital**

The University / Hospital district is most recognized as the home to Huntington University, Parkview Huntington Hospital, and uses ancillary to those institutions. This district is a continual attractor of visitors to Huntington because of the Huntington University, its students, and the unique programs that it offers. The area continues to experience a loss of owner occupied structures and declining tax base as Huntington University continues to expand. This district is primarily residential and institutional in use, making it complementary in terms of land uses. The district does contain a small part of the North Jefferson Street National Register.

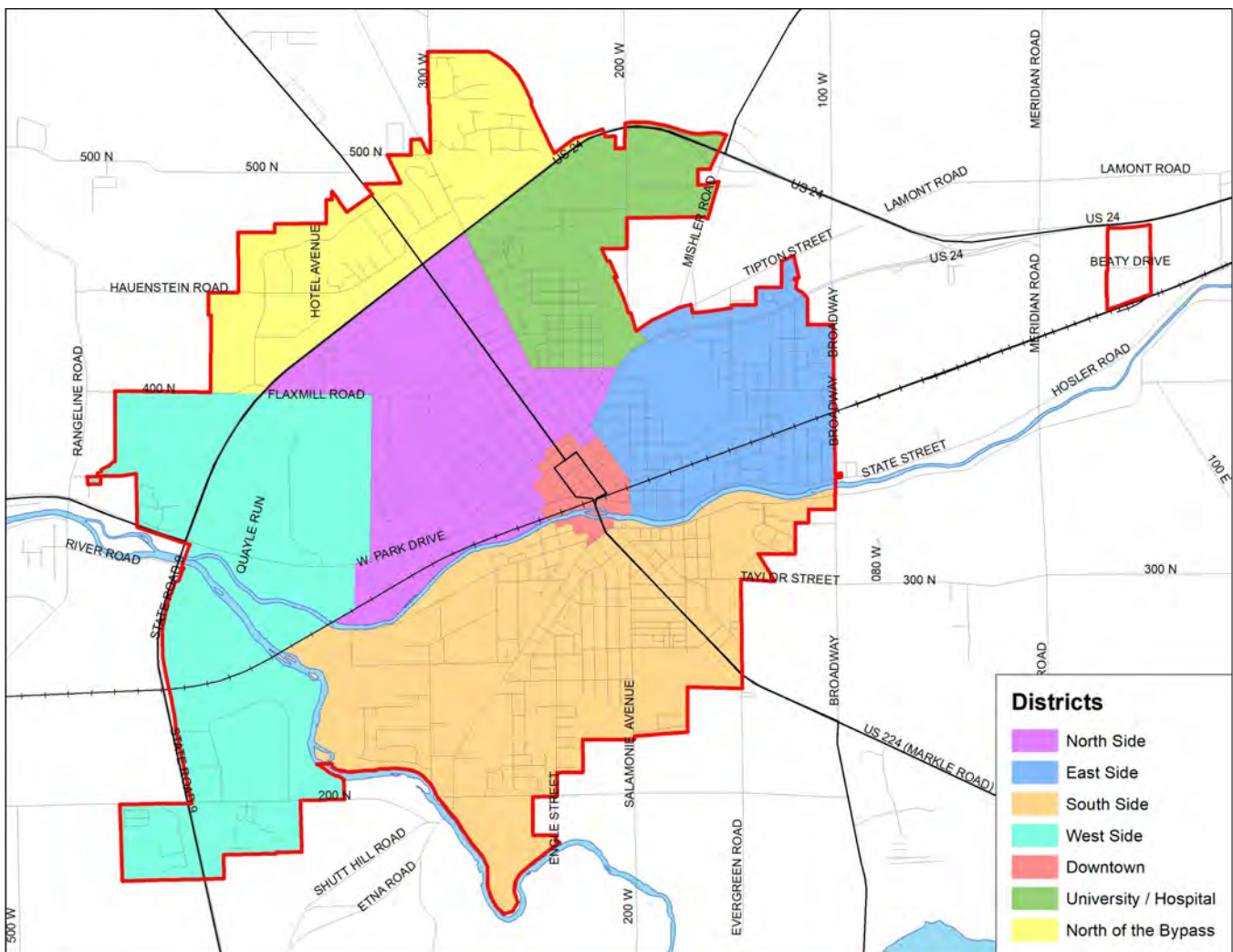
**North of the Bypass**

This district has experienced the most growth of any district in the City in recent years. As a result of this growth, property values have increased substantially, leading to high taxes that are not always sustainable for some owners or uses. The district is almost exclusively commercial and industrial in land use, although some low and high density residential uses exist on the fringe. Its location along the U.S. Highway 24 corridor makes it a high visibility area and attractive for further growth and development. Landmarks in the district are primarily commercial businesses that are primary shopping locations for residents and visitors.

In the past, the City of Huntington has not taken full advantage of its districts from a marketing perspective and should fully consider the benefits that can be achieved from them. The ultimate beneficiary in these districts, aside from those who live and work there, is the City of Huntington itself through increased tax revenue, talent and resident attraction, and physical enhancements that spur further investment. These long-term economic benefits should encourage the City to fully invest in rebranding and identifying these districts through wayfinding signage.

## • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Perform a district inventory that details both the geographic and physical description of the districts of the City of Huntington as they presently exist.
2. Incorporate each of Huntington's districts into the overall marketing of Huntington as a community. As Huntington works to build its image and branding, elements from each district can be incorporated into the showcase. Each district contains unique physical attributes with businesses, services, and amenities that are appealing to residents and visitors alike. The promotion will result in increased awareness of the various shopping, entertainment, and cultural destinations that each district has to offer, collectively making Huntington even more of a destination.
3. Perform a wayfinding study and implement a wayfinding program to provide signage to better direct visitors to the different districts. Each district should have wayfinding signage design elements that create a unique district identity, drawing upon historic and cultural elements in crafting the identity.



*A map of Huntington Districts as identified by the Steering Committee*



## D. Gateways

### • Issues and Findings

Gateways to a community are important points, often located along key corridors leading into the City that identify incorporated boundaries. In Huntington, the only formally established primary gateways are along those routes leading into the city from specific highways. These newly established gateways feature brick and limestone signs and small landscaped areas that welcome visitors to Huntington. Presently, these standardized gateways can be found at the entrance to Huntington along both directions of U.S. 24 (at Meridian Road and just east of Rangeline Road) and at Broadway & U.S. Highway 224.

Secondary gateways can also be established that call attention to special areas of the community such as downtown or other areas of importance. Secondary gateways exist in the form of informal welcoming elements maintained by private entities and organizations such as those at the main entrance of Huntington University.

Since this plan's original adoption, Huntington has established a standard primary gateway signage program and erected three new signs with more planned for the future. This signage will not leave any doubt with visitors being unsure about whether they have officially entered into Huntington or not. Unlike primary gateways, secondary gateways should be unique to the individual areas, districts, or attractions that they service. Although these two types of gateways are steps in the right direction, the lack of design coordination and implementation at other key entry points leave the overall system less than successful.

### • Strategies and Recommendations

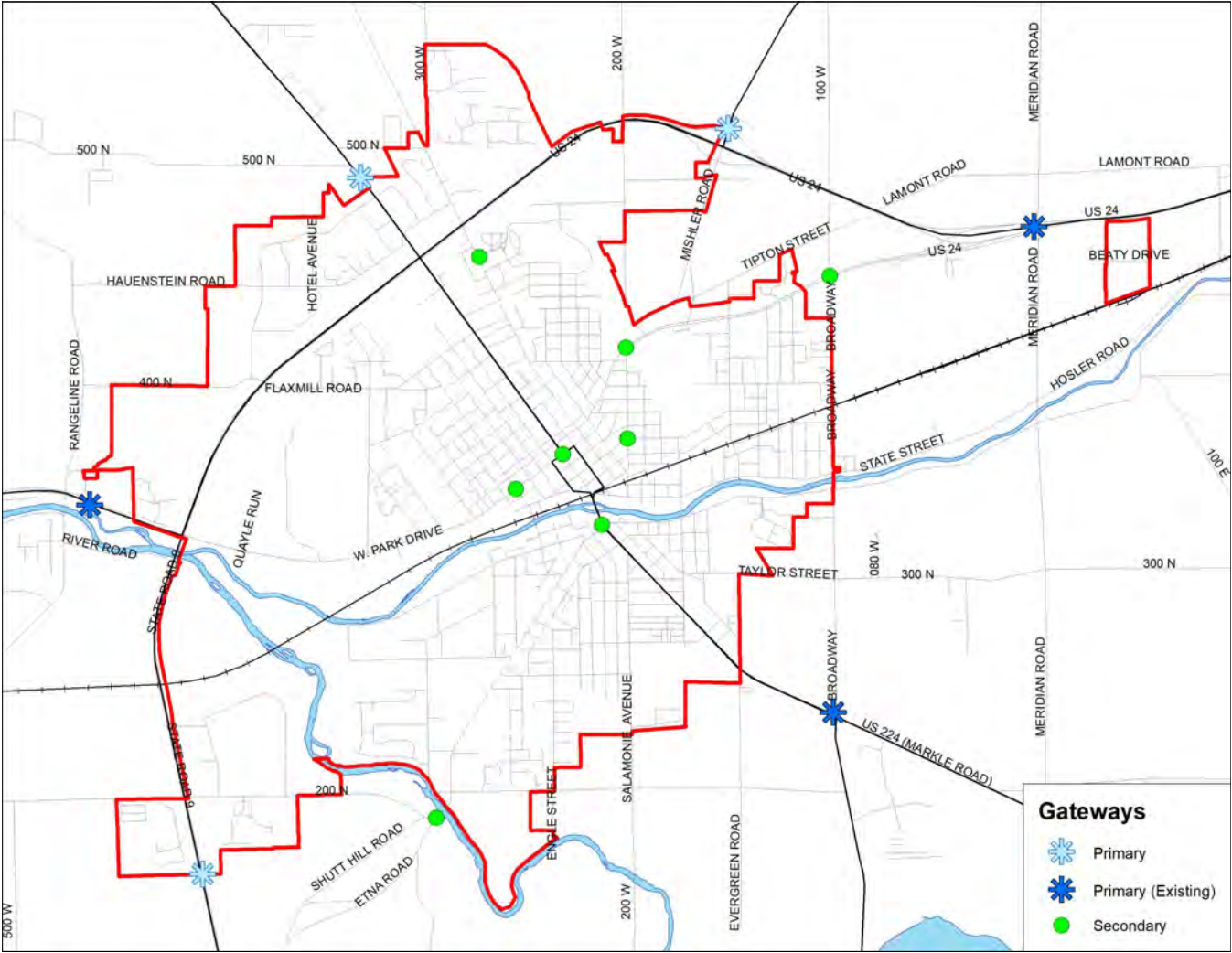
1. Continue to implement the primary gateway program with uniform gateway signage and landscaping at all primary gateways and ensure consistent maintenance of these areas.
2. Support community organizations that seek to improve the image around gateway points to eliminate elements that detract from a welcoming invitation to Huntington.
3. Encourage the development of additional public and private secondary gateways. These gateways should be unique to the areas they represent and draw upon historical and cultural elements to create a visual voice for these special locations.



*A new style primary gateway sign on U.S. 224*



*A sample secondary gateway sign at Huntington University*



A map of Primary and Secondary Gateways for Huntington

## E. Corridors

### • Issues and Findings

Huntington has a variety of different corridors that are comprised of major and arterial roadways which serve as connective links for the community. Due to the large number of major roadways that intersect in Huntington, several important corridors not only guide travelers through Huntington, but also provide them with lasting first impressions.

The primary corridors of Huntington include major roadways such as Jefferson Street (U.S. Highway 224 & State Road 5), State Road 9, and U.S. Highway 24. These corridors both bisect and loop the City as they provide continuous passage to motorists. Primary corridors are important economic routes of Huntington, as they are heavily used for commerce and by visitors who can be enticed to visit Huntington and do business here.



*Etna Avenue, a heavily traveled secondary corridor*

Secondary corridors are those corridors of the local community, in some cases these corridors spur off of primary corridors. Secondary corridors are also utilized by visitors, but primarily service local residents as a means for getting from one area of the City to another. These corridors typically offer a mixture of uses along their entirety, giving them notable local economic impact.

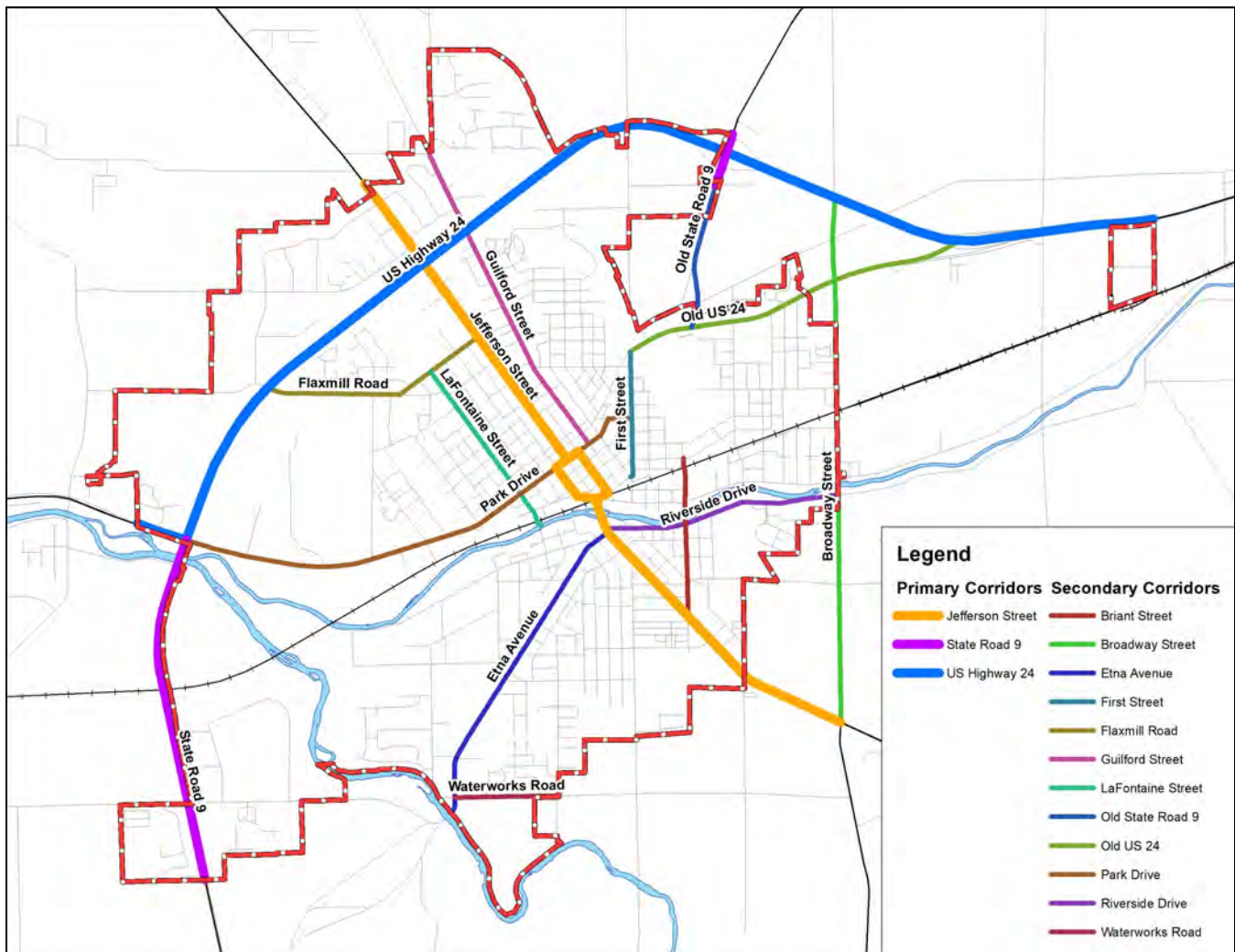
In all, because of the significant traffic counts along primary and secondary corridors, businesses and institutions often locate along these routes for ease of access by patrons. These corridors play an important role in the personality and character of Huntington. They are elements of the urban fabric and offer a timeless impression on visitors of Huntington. Consequently, it is important that Huntington consider aesthetic and functional aspects of these roadways. The overall image conveyed from road design is heavily influenced by sidewalks, streetscape enhancements, building architecture, landscaping, and signage found along these areas.

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Perform a physical analysis of primary and secondary corridors to compare the imagery of the streetscape periphery along the roadways and assess the physical constraints and enhancement opportunities.
2. Explore possible partnership opportunities with key businesses and institutions located along primary and secondary corridors to discuss the importance of physical image enhancement. Any enhancement should be custom tailored to each individual participant while complementary to the overall program.
3. Coordinate primary corridor enhancements with the Indiana Department of Transportation. As a critical partner of primary corridors, INDOT has full authority over most of Huntington's primary corridors. INDOT improvements already approved and future roadway improvements will have a significant impact on the appearance of Huntington's corridors. It is important that the City of Huntington convey its desire to tailor any relevant improvements to match local interests through context sensitive design.



4. Examine the possibility of adopting zoning overlay districts that preserve and enhance primary and secondary corridors. The City should work with various stakeholders to identify redevelopment opportunities along corridors that have a significant impact on the image of Huntington. Overlay districts that consider design guidelines, mixed use development of appropriate scale, and specific permitted uses will help to preserve and enhance the economic vitality of corridors.



*Primary and Secondary Corridors as identified by the Steering Committee*

## **CITY IMAGE AND IDENTITY**

### **F. City Issues**

- **Issues and Findings**

The following barriers were identified by the Steering Committee as being important to the image and identity of the City of Huntington in addition to those areas previously discussed. These issues are of varying importance and some issues were deemed to be relevant to only a specific area of the City, while others have an impact on the community as a whole. Regardless of the degree of importance or the areas impacted, these issues are an important part of both the external image portrayed to visitors and the internal feelings felt by residents.

1. Lack of pride and maintenance of the Little River, which could positively impact residential quality of life.
2. Lack of local ownership of real estate, leading to absentee landlords and reduce owner buy-in as it relates to property maintenance and general civic pride.
3. Declining visual appearance of older neighborhoods that are home to primarily lower property values, creating a less than perfect first impression of Huntington.
4. Mixture of incompatible land uses which can discourage pride in property ownership and upkeep.
5. Have yet to fully capitalize on local environmental, historical, and cultural resources in order to brand Huntington as a destination, which could increase economic opportunities, create growth, and foster local appeal.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Capitalize on the Little River as an amenity, implementing strategic steps from the Parks & Recreation Department Trails & Greenways Master Plan and encourage suitable development along these areas.
2. Support existing and encourage the development of additional neighborhood associations across the city.
3. Continue consistent Code Enforcement and evaluate the need and effectiveness of property maintenance codes.
4. Revisit the types of permitted uses within each zoning district and increase the enforcement of such zoning standards.
5. Pursue grants and other public and private funding mechanisms that allow property owners to improve structures.
6. Begin a citywide image building and branding campaign to increase the appeal of Huntington to residents and visitors alike that showcases the various amenities that Huntington has to offer.



## V. GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

*"When we start including the higher aspirations of community into the mix; comfort, conviviality, beauty and fun, we begin to make places that are beyond merely livable and may ultimately be lovable."*

*-Peter Kageyama*

*For the Love of Cities: The Love Affair Between People and their Places-*



## A. Introduction

Huntington's local government is vital to the welfare of its citizens and the community. The underlying purpose of government is to serve, protect, and guide public interests by authorizing, promoting, and developing the establishment and implementation of public services. The City has a duty as the trustee of public interests in assisting, developing, and promoting the community. Public officials serve the citizens of Huntington through effective leadership in providing necessary services.



The City has the primary role in protecting and preserving resources, the environment, and other assets vital to the community including its neighborhoods, business districts, and public facilities. The Comprehensive Plan reviews the existing context of local government structure and makes recommendations regarding local government in order to improve, facilitate, and organize the administrative and legislative processes of the community.

Community services located in Huntington are a key ingredient in the overall identity and quality of life of the community. Many of the plan participants commented about their high level of satisfaction with the various community services offered in Huntington. These amenities help to retain existing residents and attract new residents. Community services are the main pillars of local government, services including trash collection, snow and leaf removal, street sweeping, and general infrastructure improvements and maintenance that collectively promote public welfare. These types of public services help to keep Huntington functioning efficiently.

## B. Goals and Objectives

### • Goals

The City of Huntington will promote the safety, health, and welfare of all citizens through cooperation. Agencies and departments will work together to encourage and promote quality, cost-effective development, which promotes a high quality of life. The City will provide efficient services and utilities in order to foster development and maintain exceptional service levels in order to meet the ever changing needs of the residents and businesses.

### • Objectives

1. Develop, update, and review current regulatory documents that meet the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Further strengthen intergovernmental cooperation in order to further the ease of the development process.
3. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for all Departments and utilities to ensure that services, improvements, and capital outlays keep pace with demand in the most cost effective manner while ensuring that antiquated equipment is replaced with more modern and efficient equipment.
4. Create public information programs that ensure a solid understanding of the roles that utilities play, the mandate requirements that they face, and how rates are utilized in order to provide optimum public services.
5. Strengthen infrastructure extension policies to ensure that land is annexed before extensions occur.



## C. Organization and Regulatory Structure

- **Issues and Findings**

Huntington is classified as a third class city under Indiana Code. Indiana Code 36-4-1 specifically defines a third class city as a municipality that has a population of less than 35,000. In comparison, first class cities have populations of 600,000 or more, and second class cities have populations of 35,000 to 599,000. According to Census 2017 estimates, Huntington is the 42nd largest city in Indiana. Huntington is governed by a seven member Common Council and full time Mayor and City Clerk-Treasurer, all of which are elected to four-year terms within the same election cycle. The Community Development and Redevelopment Department (CDR), a full-service land use and development department, provides the City with planning, zoning, historic preservation, building permits, and inspections services. A general overview of the City's responsibilities and procedures regarding overall growth and development is described below.

### **Community Development & Redevelopment Department**

The Department was established in 2014 after the City had determined that it was in its best interest to bring land use and permitting services back in-house. A brief history of these efforts are: From the time when zoning was established in the City up until 1989/1990 the City provided these services in-house. In 1989/1990 the City and County decided to pool their efforts and resources and merge their two individual departments into the Huntington City/County Planning Department to provide services to all of City of Huntington and Huntington County. In 1999 the department was reorganized and reestablished as the Huntington Countywide Department of Community Development. This was done as the Department had begun to provide planning and zoning services to the small towns of Huntington County.



**CITY OF HUNTINGTON**

Community Development  
& Redevelopment

The Community Development & Redevelopment Department, in addition to other matters, is responsible for the processing of development plan applications and other necessary permits and approvals. It also works with the Advisory Plan Commission and Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals in making recommendations on planning, zoning, and policy issues that impact the built environment. The Department provides staff review, recommendations and advises on projects that include a zoning change, special exception, variance of use, or variance from development standards. The recommendations provided by the Department are guided by the Comprehensive Plan and sound planning practices. Special considerations are made in instances where planning insight is requested. The Department staff reviews preliminary site plans, parking requirements, landscaping plans, and general questionable zoning situations. When a project cannot meet required development standards or is not appropriately zoned, staff helps to determine if a variance or other approval can be granted for the project. This assessment is based upon the Department's review of an applicant's hardship and other specifics of the situation. This is resolved by a means of public non-conformance condition of the site or structure, which does not negatively impact the public health, safety, comfort, morals, convenience, or general public welfare.

In conjunction with planning and zoning services, the Department staffs building and permitting professionals. Collectively, these individuals, with the assistance of other staff members, oversee building code violations, building permits, inspections, minimum housing standards, and unsafe structure regulation. The Department administers and enforces provisions of the Subdivision Code as it relates to parcel splits and major subdivisions of land. The Department also handles floodplain administration, annexation, and administers the City's Commercial Façade & Roof Grant program. The final facet of the Department is to administer historic preservation programs. This is done primarily through the Historic Review Board, which facilitates grants and registers significant districts and sites.



The Department consults with the following city and county departments in its processing of proposed development and redevelopment projects. A summary of the roles of each related department:

- **Legal** - Reviews ordinances, advises on procedural issues, and provides legal counsel to the Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and other city boards and commissions.
- **Engineering** - Reviews on conformance with city standards and provides other technical assistance.
- **Utilities** - Advise on infrastructure availability and upgrades that may be required.
- **Police** - Advise on potential traffic safety issues.
- **Fire** - Advise about site access for emergency situations and fire code compliance.
- **Health** - Review proposed development and structural or use alterations as they relate to public health and food service ordinances.
- **Mayor** - Determines whether projects conflict with their administrative goals, evaluate possible public funding.

The Community Development & Redevelopment Department coordinates and consults with outside agencies on land use and development issues, including Huntington County Economic Development (HCED) on industrial development, the Huntington County Chamber of Commerce on commercial and retail development, Main Street Huntington on downtown development and revitalization issues, and other organizations that have a vested interest in the City. The Community Development & Redevelopment Department serves as support staff to the following Boards and Commissions:

#### **Advisory Plan Commission**

The City of Huntington Advisory Plan Commission, which is established and authorized by Indiana Code, has seven members and is charged with developing zoning classifications, maintaining development standards, and reviewing land use requests within the City of Huntington. The Plan Commission does not have extraterritorial jurisdiction beyond its corporate limits at this time. Recommendations are made by this body for the Common Council to approve or deny zoning requests. Rezoning is ultimately approved or denied by the Common Council after considering recommendations from the Department and Plan Commission. Recommendations are based upon changing conditions of the area, goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, and standard planning practices. The Plan Commission's primary role is to develop and maintain a Comprehensive Plan for public structures, utilities, streets, and public lands to regulate and classify land and its uses through zoning.

#### **Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals**

The City of Huntington Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) consists of five members who are appointed by the Mayor, Common Council, and Plan Commission. The Board meets monthly to conduct public hearings, hear debate, and approve or deny applications. Factors and considerations include special exceptions, variances of use, variances from development standards, and other administrative appeals as they relate to the Zoning Code and Subdivision Code. In certain cases, the Board has authorized the use of a hearing officer.

#### **Historic Review Board**

The City of Huntington Historic Review Board (HRB) is comprised of seven members appointed by the Mayor. The Board meets regularly to advise the City on historic matters and review requests for new development with various regulated historic districts and changes to single sites. The Board assists the Department and the City in determining when to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, designating new historic districts and sites, and evaluating proposals to existing historic structures as they relate to architectural compatibility in terms of design and materials.

**Redevelopment Commission**

The City of Huntington Redevelopment Commission (RDC) consists of five members who are appointed by the Mayor and Common Council. The primary goal of the Redevelopment Commission is to provide increased economic opportunity by utilizing public resources to leverage increased private investment in order to increase property values, create and preserve jobs, and improve quality of life. The RDC administers and oversees two Economic Development Areas (EDA) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts. Those TIF Districts include the 2008 Consolidated EDA and the Cinergy MetroNet EDA.

**City of Huntington Elected Officials, Departments, and Boards**

The City of Huntington is a municipality organized as a Mayor-Council form of local government. This is the oldest and most common form of municipal government authorized by Indiana Code. The Mayor holds an executive office and oversees the various City departments responsible to him. The Mayor is elected by the citizens and serves a 4-year term. The Common Council serves as the legislative body that enacts laws, appoints citizens to boards and commissions, and sets the municipal budget. Common Council members are elected at-large and by district to 4-year terms.

**Office of the Mayor**

The Mayor serves as the executive branch of city government and provides leadership to the City of Huntington by overseeing all City departments in their accomplishment of goals and establishment of priorities. The Mayor's Office works closely with department heads, supervisors, and managers to bring forward the best plan of action for the City and its citizens. The Mayor typically receives initial public input, complaints or questions about city services and projects. The Mayor represents the community, speaks at public events, and gives proclamations to commemorate or honor individuals, special events, organizations, and holidays.

**Common Council**

The seven member Common Council or City Council as it is most often referred to, is the legislative branch of city government. It is comprised of part-time elected officials whose primary responsibilities are the passage of ordinances and resolutions, and the appropriation of budgets. The Council fixes the salaries of City employees and elected officials as they carry out the role of a fiscal body. Council also has the power to create committees and make various appointments to Boards and Commissions.

**City Clerk-Treasurer**

The City Clerk-Treasurer maintains all public records, documents, ordinances, resolutions, agreements, contracts, and official meeting minutes. The Clerk-Treasurer is elected by the citizens and serves a 4-year term. The office maintains and preserves the integrity of the City's records as it relates to the Common Council, and all actions, ordinances, resolutions, agreements, contracts, deeds, and minutes as it relates to the Board of Public Works and Safety. The Clerk-Treasurer is also the fiscal agent of the City, preparing and administering approved budgets and other monetary matters. The various records maintained by the office are readily available to the citizens of Huntington, outside agencies, the general public, and all other City personnel.

The office of the Clerk-Treasurer is the primary public service office with those who contact the municipal government, either via telephone or in person. Most often, the Clerk-Treasurer's Office provides referrals to other agencies and departments within the City. The office is responsible for maintaining all official records and documents, and distributes this information to the public as requested. Ongoing responsibilities include answering general phone calls, accepting public record requests, and preparing information and agendas for both the Common Council and the Board of Public Works and Safety. The office of City Clerk-Treasurer also administers city parking passes, collects fines for parking violations, issues garage sale permits, and collects airport hangar rental fees.

**Board of Public Works and Safety**

The Board of Public Works and Safety is a five member Board comprised of the Mayor and four citizens that are appointed by the Mayor. The Board serves as the chief administrative body for the City, its powers include the oversight of the day-to-day operations of City Departments. The major function of the Board is ensuring emergency services protection, and street, water, and sewer operations. In addition, the Board approves and maintains all contractual agreements that the City enters into.

**Board of Aviation**

The Board of Aviation Commissioners is a five member Board appointed by the Mayor. It is responsible for operations and maintenance of the Huntington Municipal Airport through its oversight of a contractual fixed base operator (manager). The airport, located southeast of Huntington is classified as a general aviation airport. The airport occupies approximately 140 acres of land which includes a single 5,000 foot runway, multiple aircraft hangers, and other general aviation services and facilities.

**City Attorney**

The City's legal staff is selected by each Mayor and serves at the pleasure of the Mayor on a contractual basis. The City Attorney and Associate City Attorneys provide general oversight on legal issues that involve the City. The legal team prepares ordinances and resolutions for the Common Council, Board of Public Works and Safety and other boards or commissions as directed by the Mayor. In addition, legal counsel also prepares and reviews all contracts and commitments executed by City Departments prior to execution.

**City Engineering Department**

The City Engineering Department is primarily responsible for the coordination of City projects as they relate to infrastructure. The Department reviews proposed developments for consistency with City standards and also issues various permits, performs inspections, maintains city maps, and addresses storm water and drainage issues. The City Engineer typically serves as administrator for the various state and federal programs charged to the Department, in addition to being the employee of responsible charge as it relates to grants awarded to the City.

**City Garage**

The City Garage, co-located with the Street Department is responsible for the maintenance of City vehicles and equipment. Along with performing preventative maintenance, repairs and vehicle record keeping, the Department also advises other City departments prior to equipment and vehicle purchases.

**City Landfill**

The City Landfill, located approximately 4 miles south of the heart of the City, was the last active municipal solid waste landfill in Huntington County and the final municipally owned landfill in the State of Indiana prior to its closure in 2019. The landfill site totals 235 acres of land and served as the repository for waste from across Huntington County. The landfill also houses an office and receiving facility for the Huntington County Solid Waste Management District. The landfill remains open for receipt of brush, grass clippings, and leaves only as the City embarks on its post-closure compliance period for the next thirty plus years.

**Human Resources Department**

The City Human Resources Department is responsible for employment and compliance related issues of the City. The office administers insurance programs, maintains personnel records, and acts as the fiscal agent for the City's self-insurance programs. The office handles employment opening opportunities and ensures compliance with all applicable employment and insurance laws and regulations.

**Huntington Police Department**

The Huntington Police Department maintains law enforcement jurisdiction throughout the corporate limits of the City of Huntington. It is responsible for crime investigation, public safety, and traffic safety. It also issues gun permits and is responsible for enforcement of the nuisance ordinance. The Department works closely with Huntington County Public Safety Dispatch, the countywide department that the City contracts with to handle 911 related emergency phone calls.

**Huntington Fire Department**

The Huntington Fire Department is charged with protecting the lives and property of the residents of the City of Huntington. The Department provides a range of emergency services and fire prevention education. The Fire Department supports other county fire departments with manpower and equipment through mutual aid agreements as needed. The Department works closely with Huntington County Public Safety Dispatch, the countywide department that the City contracts with to handle 911 related emergency phone calls.

**Parks and Recreation Department**

The Huntington Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining City parks and recreation areas and providing community and youth recreation programs. It also administers the rental of parks and buildings and develops a Parks and Recreation Master Plan along with several other long-range planning documents.

**Street Department**

The Huntington Street Department primarily oversees the development and maintenance of streets and other roadways. In addition, the Department is in charge of traffic control through signs and road markings, snow removal, large item pickup, and tree removal.

**Water Department**

The City of Huntington Water Utility administers all aspects of municipal water delivery and billing. The Department handles new service connections, transfers and termination of utility services, meter reading, repair, and maintenance, water main repair and maintenance, fire hydrant repair and maintenance, and required water quality reporting. It contracts with a private operator to handle the day to day operations of its two water plants.

**Water Billing Department**

The Water Billing Department is the primary public interaction point for utility customers. The Department's responsibilities include the calculation, mailing, and collection of combined water and sewer bills, general customer service in person and by telephone, service starts and stops, and coordination of in-the-field service appointments.

**Water Pollution Control Department**

The Water Pollution Control Department maintains primary responsibility over all sanitary and storm sewers within the City. The Department is the lead agency in the elimination of combined municipal sewers in order to reduce pollution and submission of all required reports and filings as it relates to sewer operations. It contracts with a private operator to handle the day to day operations of its wastewater treatment plant, lift stations, and pretreatment program.

## D. Annexation

### • Issues and Findings

Annexation is the absorption of land by a municipal corporation from an unincorporated area of another jurisdiction. It is the primary method of reconfiguring local government boundaries as areas urbanize and grow. Huntington has a long history of annexation; beginning in the mid 1900's various amounts of land were annexed incrementally to form present day Huntington. As of 2019, The City of Huntington occupied approximately 9.14 square miles of land area. It is important to the community that areas appropriate for annexation and growth are clearly identified and agreed upon. Development opportunities outside of Huntington's municipal boundaries will present themselves and may be in the community's interest to annex. These opportunities must be weighed carefully and decisions should be made as to whether the community can adequately support the development in terms of infrastructure services. The City of Huntington should be prepared with annexation policies, capital improvement plans, and general infrastructure agreements for the continued expansion of its boundaries.



*An early map of Huntington in 1879*

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Ensure that the City is able to meet the additional demand for services that are brought on by annexation through the establishment of general criteria which evaluates utility master plans and other internal capacities so that new areas are serviced and service to existing areas is not diminished.
2. Utility connections for development is the primary motivation for property owners to seek annexation. Therefore utility connections should not be permitted beyond the City Limits without annexation or other agreements in the most extreme circumstances.
3. Utilize agreements in lieu of annexation only if immediate voluntary annexation cannot be obtained due to legal requirements - recognizing that erosion of home rule authority by the General Assembly may null and void any agreements in the future.
4. Require owners of land to be annexed into the City to be subject to their proportionate share of the City's bonded indebtedness.
5. Require that infrastructure recommendations in the Capital Plan and utility master plans match future annexations. Utility extensions should only be made to serve annexed areas, not to open new areas to development unless specifically called for by the Plan Commission and Comprehensive Plan through the future land use map.

## E. Water and Sewer

### • Issues and Findings

#### Water

An adequate, clean, and reliable water supply in Huntington is essential to the future quality of life if the City is to grow. Presently, the City of Huntington has two municipally owned water treatment facilities and corresponding wellfields. The South Water Plant, constructed in 1959 is 60 years old, although many upgrades have been made over the years, the facility is showing signs of its age. The North Water Plant was built in 2013 to add redundancy to the system and access a separate aquifer for production wells. The water utility currently services approximately 6,800 customers in Huntington that demand 1.0 to 2.4 million gallons daily (MGD) of water. The treatment plants are supported by 10 raw wells, 4 elevated storage tanks and 1 reserve booster station with 3 pumps that function collectively to allow for a present pumping capacity of more than 4.2 MGD. As a result, the water utility is able to provide a water system capacity beyond current normal demand.



*Huntington's North Water Plant on CR 600 N*

The water distribution system consists of approximately 114 miles of water mains that are located primarily within the City of Huntington, although it does service certain areas into the county. When a developer seeks to add new users to the existing water infrastructure, plans are filed with the City Engineering and Water Departments to ensure that available capacity exists before approvals are granted through the Community Development & Redevelopment Department. Large developments typically require that the developer fund and install the water mains under the supervision of the City prior to dedicating the infrastructure to the City for public use.

#### Sewer

Sufficient infrastructure and facilities required to manage both sanitary sewer and storm sewer are also a key component required for growth. The municipally owned sewer utility provides residential, commercial, and industrial customers with both of these sewer services. The sewer utility services approximately 6,500 customers and treats an average of 5.2 MGD with a peak wet weather flow of 15 MGD. The plant consists of two mechanically cleaned bar screens, non-mechanical vortex grit removal system, four primary clarifiers, six step-feed aeration basins, three aeration turbo blowers, five secondary clarifiers, effluent chlorination/de-chlorination facilities, rotary drum thickener, primary and secondary anaerobic digesters, two bio solids storage tanks, dry bio solids storage building, 2.25MG combined sewer overflow tank and a 110MGD pump station for stormwater overflows.

Both utilities are funded by rates and related user fees assessed to customers throughout the service areas, which cover both the corporate limits of Huntington as well as some areas immediately outside of the city limits. Both utilities have privatized their plant operations at a significant savings to the ratepayers. The utilities operate under strict guidelines set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). Beyond traditional infrastructure maintenance, the City is also a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community, which requires it to develop and implement a stormwater quality management program (SWQMP) to reduce the contamination of stormwater runoff and prohibit illicit discharge into local waterways. The Water Pollution Control Department also administers an



industrial pretreatment program as required by its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. This program aims to reduce, eliminate, or alter pollutants and their properties in wastewater prior to entering the system. This helps to protect the rivers from toxic chemicals and heavy metals associated with industrial wastewater. The program creates and maintains a high quality, land applicable sludge, while protecting employees from hazardous substances that could be released from industries.

The sewer utility is subject to an agreed order with IDEM to control combined sewer overflows within the City of Huntington under the Clean Water Act. In 2010, the City entered into state judicial agreement to adopt a Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) to be implemented over 16 years at an estimated cost of \$63M. The plan aims to further reduce or eliminate combined sewage overflows with an emphasis on sustainable infrastructure. As of 2019, six of the nine projects have been completed to date at a cost of approximately \$49.5M.



*Huntington's Wastewater Treatment Plant*

## • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Continue to provide water and sewer services to meet current and future needs of the residents, businesses, and industries of the City of Huntington.
2. Discourage the development and use of private drinking water wells within the City Limits.
3. Ensure that adequate infrastructure and capacity are in place, prior to development.
4. As part of a Capital Improvement Plan, develop a phased rate increase schedule for each utility in order to ensure that adequate financing is in place to support necessary improvement, maintenance, and expansion. Continually develop and adjust rate structures based on user class. Heavy users should pay a proportionate share of the distribution, collection and treatment cost based on their demand on the system.
5. The municipal utilities are operated as separate business units of the City and must be supported by rates and fees. Subsidizing those operations with tax supported funds or failing to adjust rates accordingly to account for operating costs, maintenance, system expansion, and modernization is not in the best interest of the community. The City should operate the utilities as businesses and not succumb to political pressure when considering demonstrated needs or opportunities for the utilities to better serve the community.
6. Implement appropriate elements from the recently completed Water Master Plan, Sewer Master Plan, Water Supply and Treatment Study, and other long-range utility planning documents.
7. Review existing standards and policies to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative standards and methods of treatment with an emphasis of sustainable technologies, and encourage their use when appropriate and cost effective in order to decrease the demand on city utility infrastructure.
8. Continue implementation of the Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) that will minimize environmental impacts, reduce combined sewage overflows (CSO) and maximize capacity of the stormwater and sewer infrastructure.

## F. City Services Department

### • Issues and Findings

The City of Huntington City Services Department is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the City's roadway infrastructure system. The Department operates out of a state of the art facility that was constructed in 2017. Typical maintenance duties include repairing or replacing broken curbs, maintaining street and alley surfaces, crack sealing, and snow plowing in the winter. The Department also grinds trip hazards from public sidewalks as prioritized by the ADA transition plan.

The City Services Department also maintains City owned parking lots and is responsible for the installation and maintenance of traffic signs, signal lights, and roadway markings. The Department provides leaf and snow removal seasonally on an as needed basis, with snow being cleared main thoroughfares cleared first, followed by secondary residential streets. Salt, gravel, and calcium chloride are applied to streets for the public's safety during hazardous winter weather conditions.



*Huntington's City Services facility on Webster Street*

The Department also oversees weekly refuse collection and bi-weekly recycling collection for residential customers. Recycling collection is handled by a private contractor and was re-introduced in 2018 after nearly a decade of discontinuance in service. With the closing of the landfill, trash collection was privatized in 2018 as well. The City Services Department continues the City's popular orange sticker project for disposal of large household items. It also oversees the maintenance of street trees, which includes their removal and stump grinding, removal of limbs and fallen trees due to weather and other associated duties.

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Continue to provide a safe and efficient road network that adequately meets the needs of the community.
2. Develop a unified Capital Plan to ensure that new infrastructure, maintenance and equipment are adequately provided in the most cost efficient manner.
3. Continue to develop and maintain various inventories (street paving, street striping, sidewalks, signage, etc.) that track conditions and maintenance efforts so that safety standards are met.
4. Begin long term planning that evaluates existing traffic demands so that improvements can be made in advance of new development needs.
5. Update City Services equipment as needed with more technologically advanced equipment that allow for more efficient service delivery, decreased worker injuries, and reduced the overall cost burden on the public.

## G. Public Safety

### • Issues and Findings

#### Fire Department

The City of Huntington Fire Department maintains a Class 3 rating by the Insurance Service Office (ISO) as of 2017. The Department previously achieved an ISO 4 rating in 2008. The Fire Department was established in 1856 and presently consists of two stations, down from three stations following realignment in 2013, consisting of 35 firefighting personnel. Station 1 is located at 747 Condit Street and was built in the late 1970's, with a major addition and remodel occurring in 2013. This station houses offices of the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief/ Fire Marshal, as well as the administrative offices. Two fire command vehicles, a rescue engine, and reserve engine are housed at Station 1. Station 3, located at 1333 Etna Avenue was built in 2002. A rescue engine, 95' aerial platform, and brush truck are located at Station 3. Currently, the Department provides coverage to the City Limits, all municipally owned property, and certain businesses just outside the City Limits through individual fire protection agreements. The Department provides fire protection, rescue services, medical assistance, and mutual aid response services 24-hours a day. In addition to emergency services, the Department also assists building owners in the development and update of preplans, offers station tours, provides fire safety education to the community, and ensures that firefighters are current on required training.



*HFD's Tower 4 which is staged at Station 3 on Etna Ave*

#### Police Department

The City of Huntington Police Department has been located within the City Building at 300 Cherry Street since 1904, although a new facility is currently under construction at 450 Cherry Street. The Department consists of 35 officers and other personnel who provide patrol and detective services to the residents of Huntington. In addition to these traditional roles, the Department also maintains various records, oversees ordinance violations, provides VIN checks, background checks, and issues gun permits. In order to strengthen community-police relationships, the Department continues its long standing tradition of assisting with programs designed for youth of the community. Operation Impact, Camp H.E.R.O. and providing School Resource Officers all help to form relationships and combat youth crimes. A Citizens Police Academy was introduced in 2018 and gave citizens the opportunity to interact with officers and better understand the daily tasks required of law enforcement today. The Department also operates a reserve officer program in order to meet event staffing needs while providing residents an opportunity to become involved in public service. The Department operates three shifts to provide 24-hour coverage to the City of Huntington and all municipally owned property.



*A rendering of the new Huntington Police Dept. Facility*



- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Evaluate current facilities and the number of employees so that the growth rate of public safety departments are established in conjunction with the population and size of the City of Huntington. Evaluate the necessity and effectiveness of staff and/or facility adjustments to create a safe and appropriate service ratio that helps to combat rising operational costs and fluctuating tax revenues.
2. Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of combining and consolidating certain public safety functions, such as a fire territory, with other agencies and jurisdictions that maximize the level of public service and reduce costs for all parties involved in a manner that results in a lower tax burden to the public.
3. Continue to evaluate the location of public safety facilities in order to improve response times and evenly distribute coverage areas in a manner that follow growth patterns (in both density and land area) when considering facility upgrades or new facilities.

## **H. Natural Gas, Electric, and Telecommunications**

- **Issues and Findings**

Major non-municipally owned utility systems in the City of Huntington include natural gas, electric power, and various modern telecommunication providers. Reliable, efficient, and affordable utilities can play a major role in the success of a community. It is important for utility providers to plan for future demands in order to ensure that adequate utility infrastructure will be available and will support changes in use and new development. It is equally important that the City of Huntington remain technologically advanced in order to provide a high quality of life for its residents and businesses and remain competitive with surrounding communities. The utility providers within the City of Huntington include municipal water and sewer utilities and other privately owned public utility companies which provide natural gas, electric, and telecommunications services within the City limits and beyond.

### **Natural Gas**

CenterPoint Energy, formerly Vectren Energy, supplies natural gas to customers throughout the City of Huntington. As a whole, CenterPoint Energy provides gas and electric services to millions of customers in eight states. Natural gas transmission and distribution lines are located along major thoroughfares all across Huntington. For new development, lateral service mains would be required to be extended in service areas where the utility does not presently exist. Costs associated with this type of infrastructure extension are typically paid by the developer or owner. Future development determines the extent and timing of expansions or upgrades of services. Successful coordination between the City and CenterPoint Energy prove beneficial to both parties in ensuring customer needs are met and areas are adequately serviced in order to be ready for development.



*CenterPoint Energy crews upgrade a gas line*

**Electric**

Duke Energy, the largest power company in the United States, provides electric utility service to a vast majority (96.4%) of the City of Huntington. Duke maintains and operates a system of transmission lines, distribution lines, and substations that ensure power delivery to its customers within the City of Huntington and across the nation. Residential, commercial, industrial, and street light services it provides are engineered to meet all safety requirements while providing an economic solution for meeting the needs of each of its individual customers. Nationwide, Duke Energy services 7.6 million electric customers in six states and is capable of delivering 49,500 megawatts of power. It delivers this power through its 277,100 miles of distribution lines and 31,900 miles of transmission lines. Energy delivered to Huntington is derived from coal, natural gas, or oil power plants located across the Midwestern United States.



*Duke Energy crews repair downed power lines due to ice*

The remaining 3.6% of land area of the City is provided electric service by Heartland REMC, a rural electric membership cooperative, which provides service 15,240 members in 9 northeast Indiana counties. Heartland REMC was founded in 2014 when United REMC and Wabash REMC consolidated their operations.

**Telecommunications**

Huntington is serviced by a number of telecommunications companies that offer telephone, cable, broadband internet, and fiber optics to residents and businesses alike. The newest of these services available is Fiber To The Premise (FTTP), a high-speed connection platform that is capable of supporting multiple telecommunication services at state of the art speeds. Advanced telecommunication services serve as an economic development tool for businesses and industry, while promoting increased residential quality of life.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Work with utilities to improve services levels and expand service areas to meet the future needs of the City. A full array of utilities should remain available to locations within the City of Huntington, with a focus on advanced telecommunication technologies, especially in areas designated for industrial and commercial growth.
2. Coordinate with utilities in advance of infrastructure projects to ensure that necessary repairs and upgrades are coordinated.
3. Consult with non municipal utilities on areas targeted for growth to ensure that adequate supply and infrastructure is available to service anticipated growth in order to sufficiently support development.

## I. Healthcare

### • Issues and Findings

Huntington offers state of the art healthcare options to its residents and others in the immediate vicinity, with access to even more advanced healthcare services within the region. Huntington is serviced by a single hospital and other facilities which include nursing homes, urgent care facilities, primary care clinics, and other specialists. Collectively, these facilities provide services that help to perpetuate a high quality of life for Huntington residents.

#### **Parkview Huntington Hospital**

Parkview Huntington Hospital, the county's only hospital and primary medical institution, is located at 2001 Stults Road. The 36 bed, short term acute care non-profit hospital was built in 2000, with several expansions occurring since then. It is accompanied by a professional office building which houses a variety of specialized medical offices. In addition, the hospital offers a critical care unit, two surgical suites, six private birthing center rooms, rehabilitation services, and various diagnostic imaging services. The hospital is situated on a 36-acre medical campus that also features a number of primary and specialty physician offices; in addition to being located adjacent to the state of the art Parkview Huntington Y.M.C.A. and The Heritage of Huntington, an assisted living, healthcare, short-term rehabilitation and Alzheimer's care facility. The location of this campus along U.S. 24 in the center of Huntington County makes it conveniently accessible for residents. The hospital is also responsible for countywide emergency medical services. The hospital operates several EMS units strategically stationed across the county that provide basic and advanced life support emergency services.



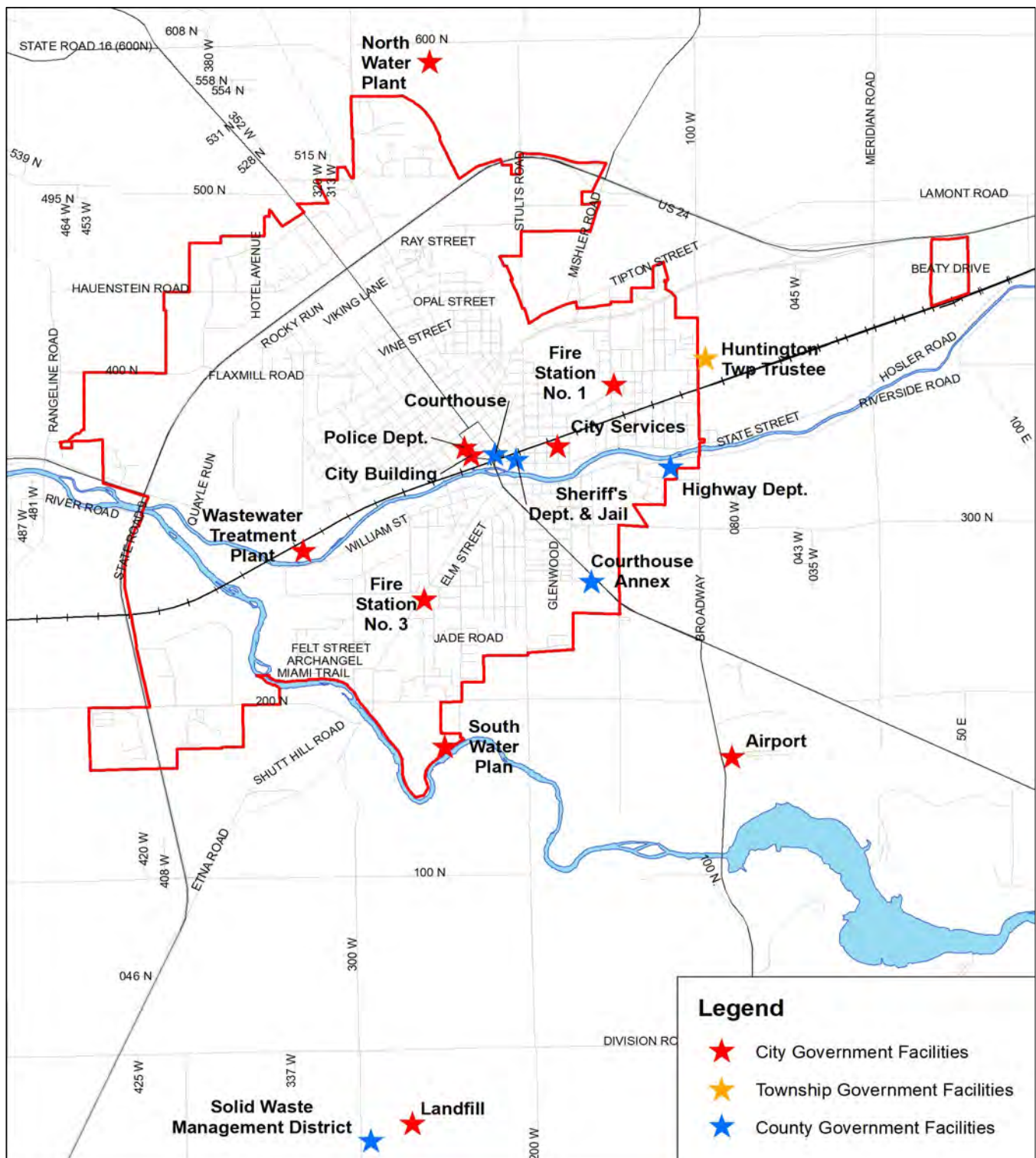
*The Parkview Huntington Hospital Campus as of 2016*

### • Strategies and Recommendations

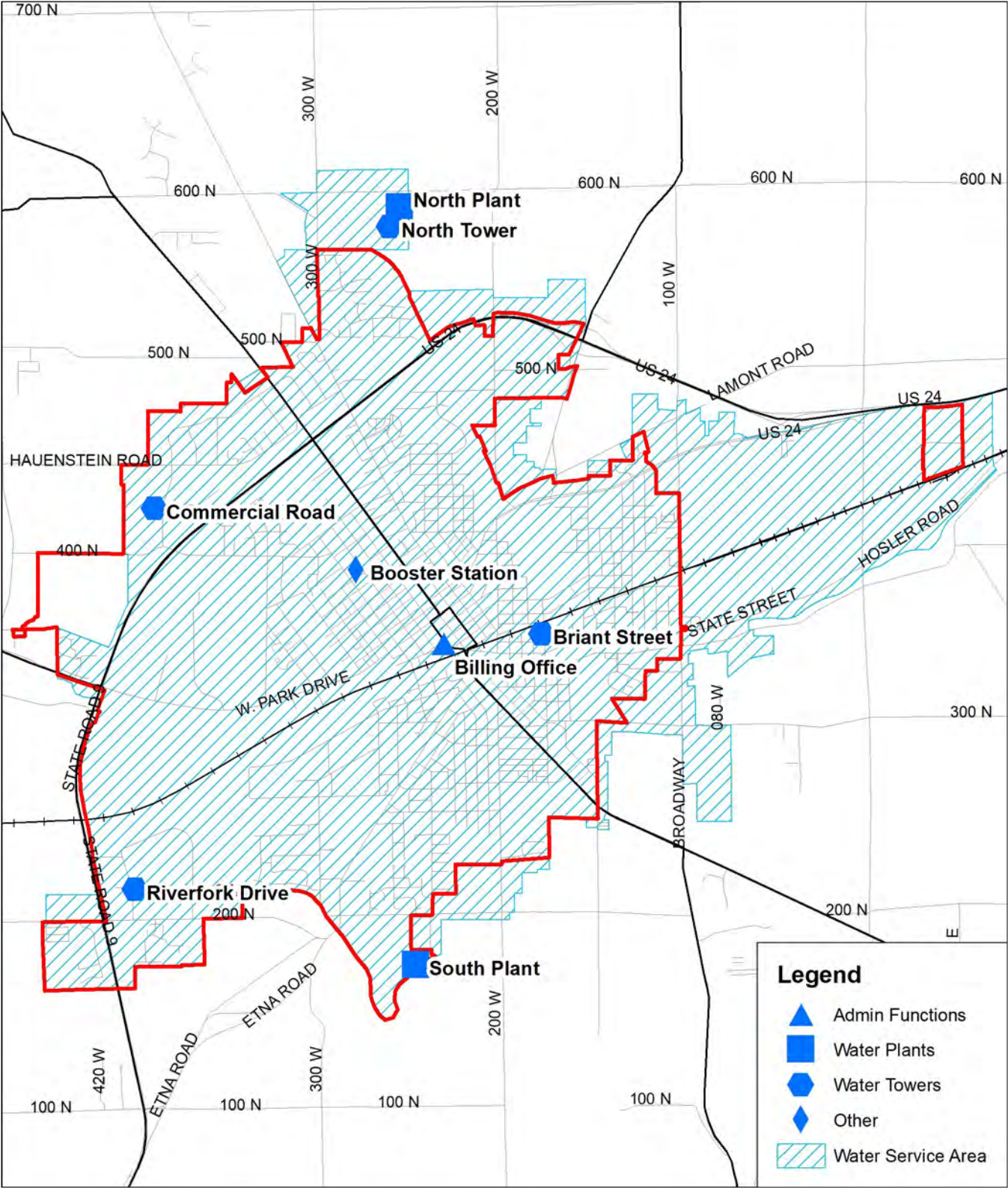
1. Encourage the location of larger healthcare related businesses within proximity to existing and proposed medical centers. The City will encourage these related services to be located in clusters that are compatible in scale with the surrounding land uses and serve the needs of the community.
2. Encourage the location of small, neighborhood style healthcare services to be strategically located throughout the community in order to provide convenient access to primary medical services.
3. Continue to support healthcare and related wellness services, programs, and opportunities to the residents of Huntington in order to further elevate quality of life and wellness.



## J. Government and Community Services Maps

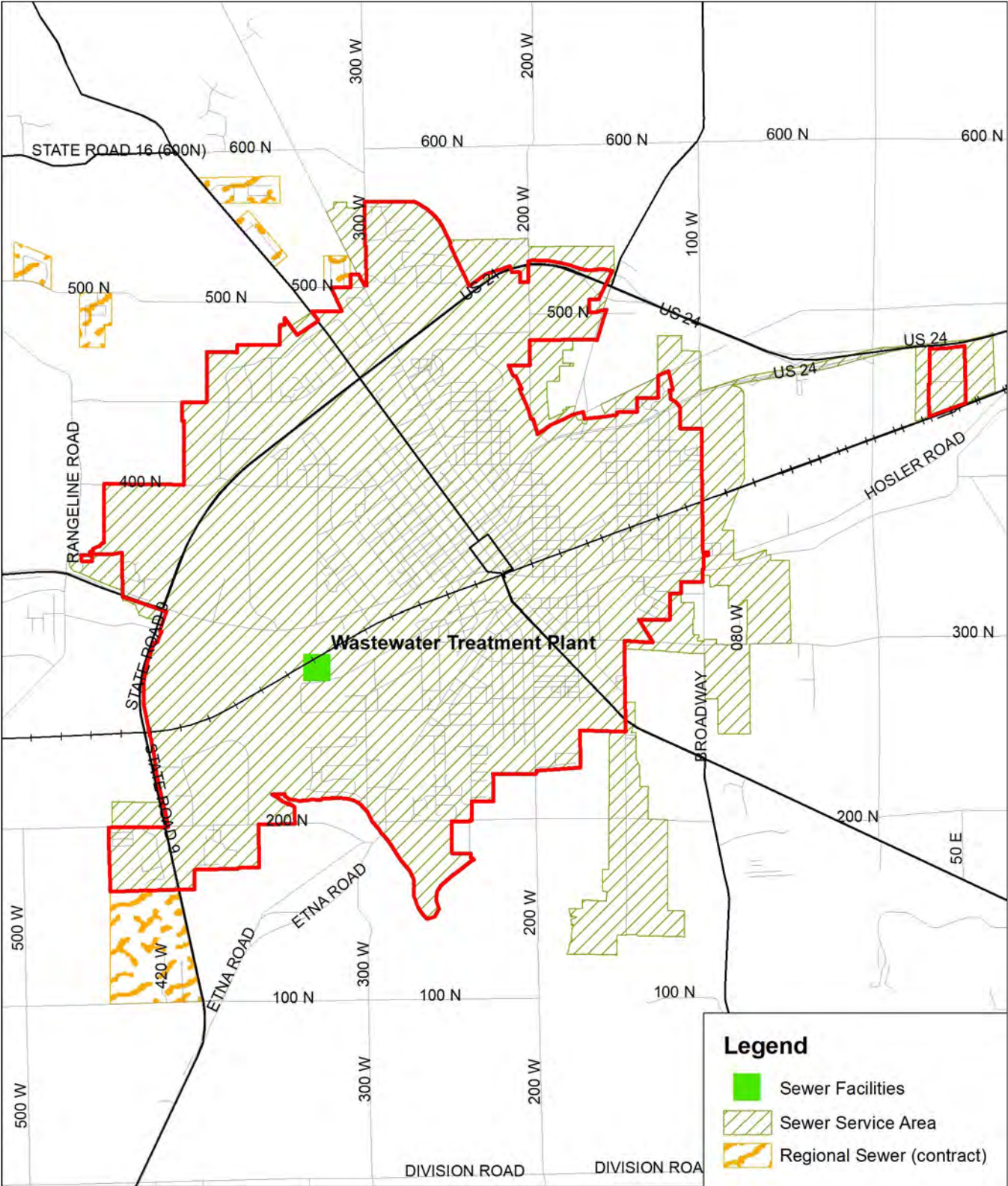


*A map showing existing government facilities that serve Huntington*

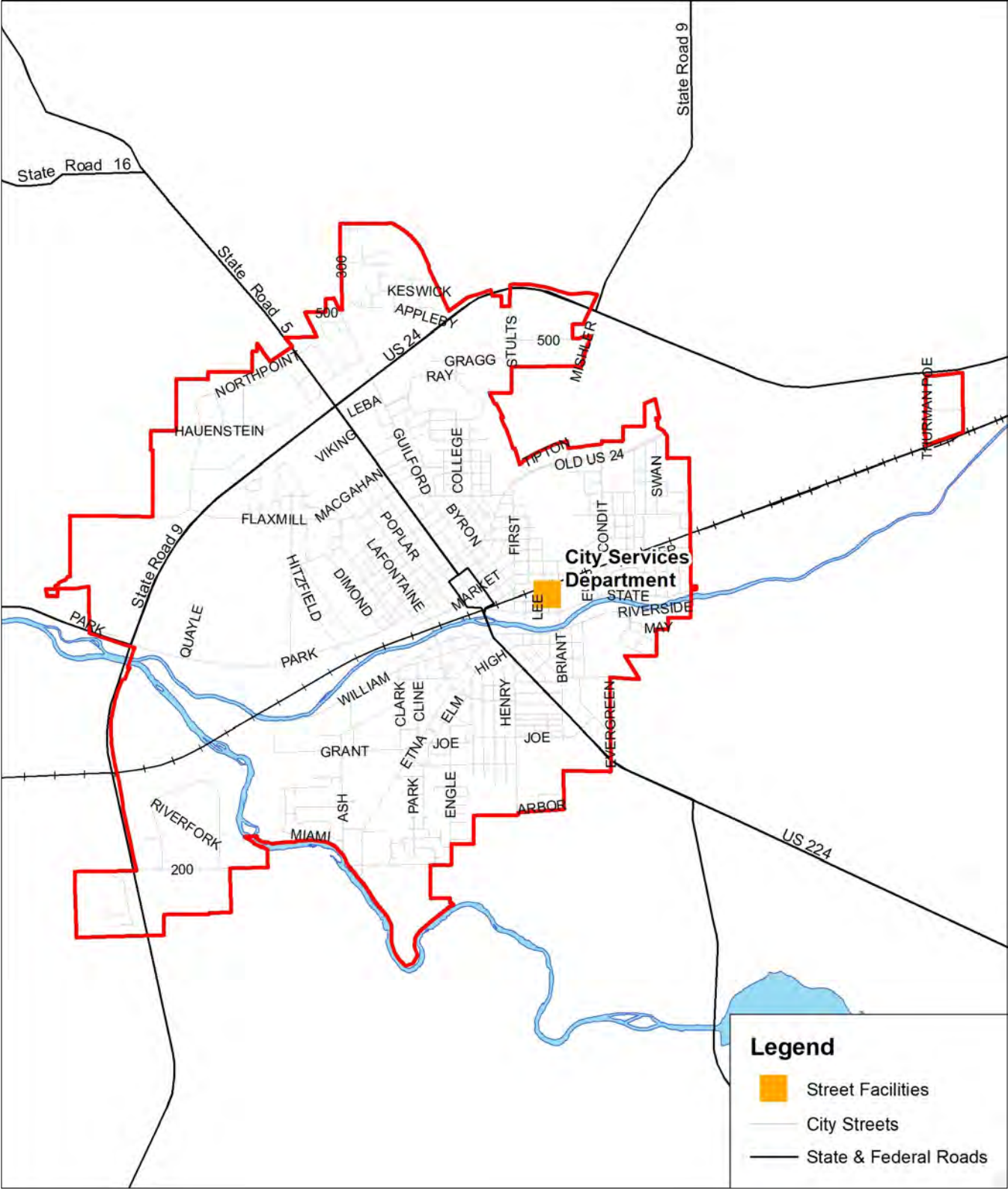


A map showing water infrastructure and municipal water service territory



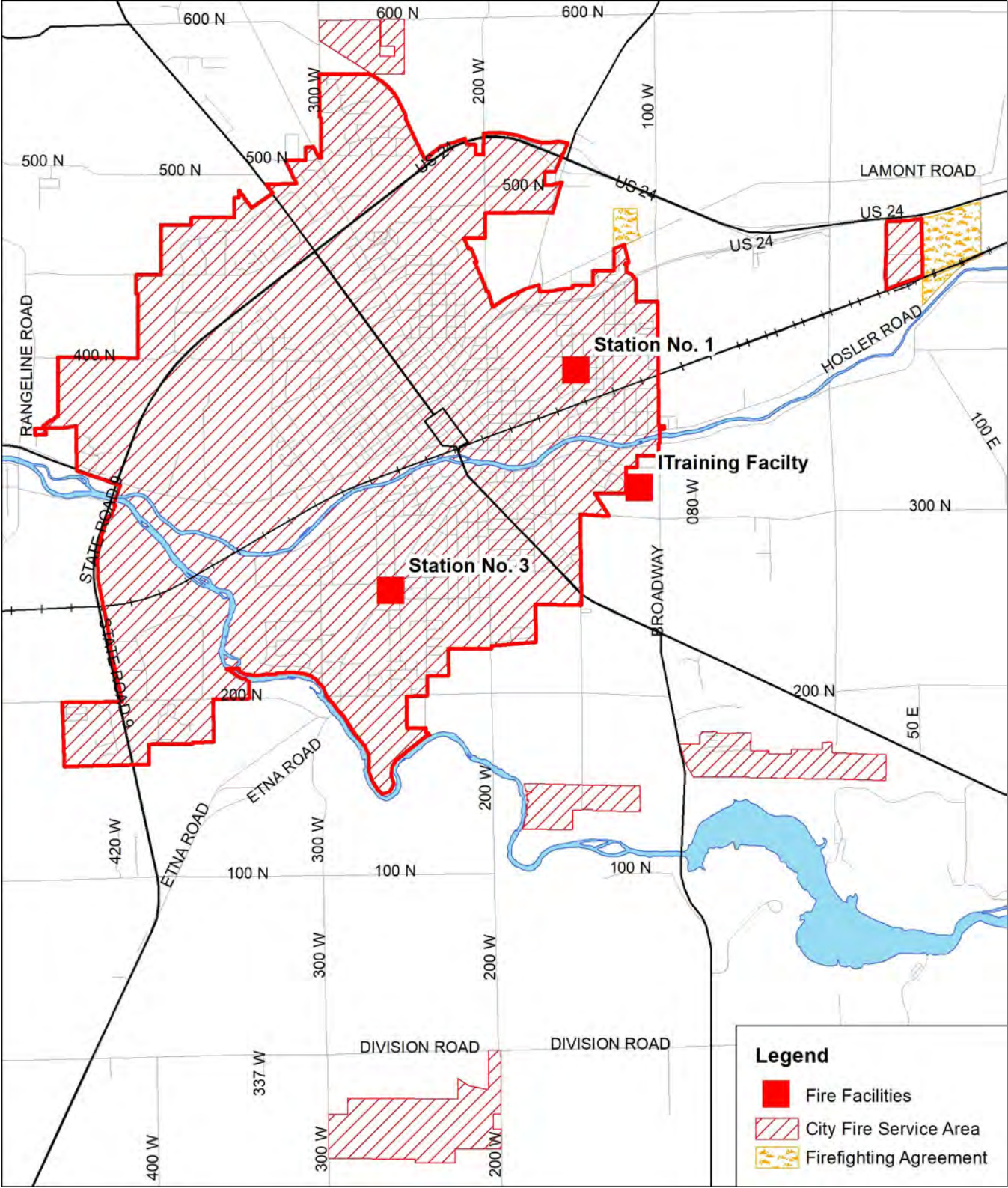


A map showing sewer infrastructure and municipal sanitary sewer service territory



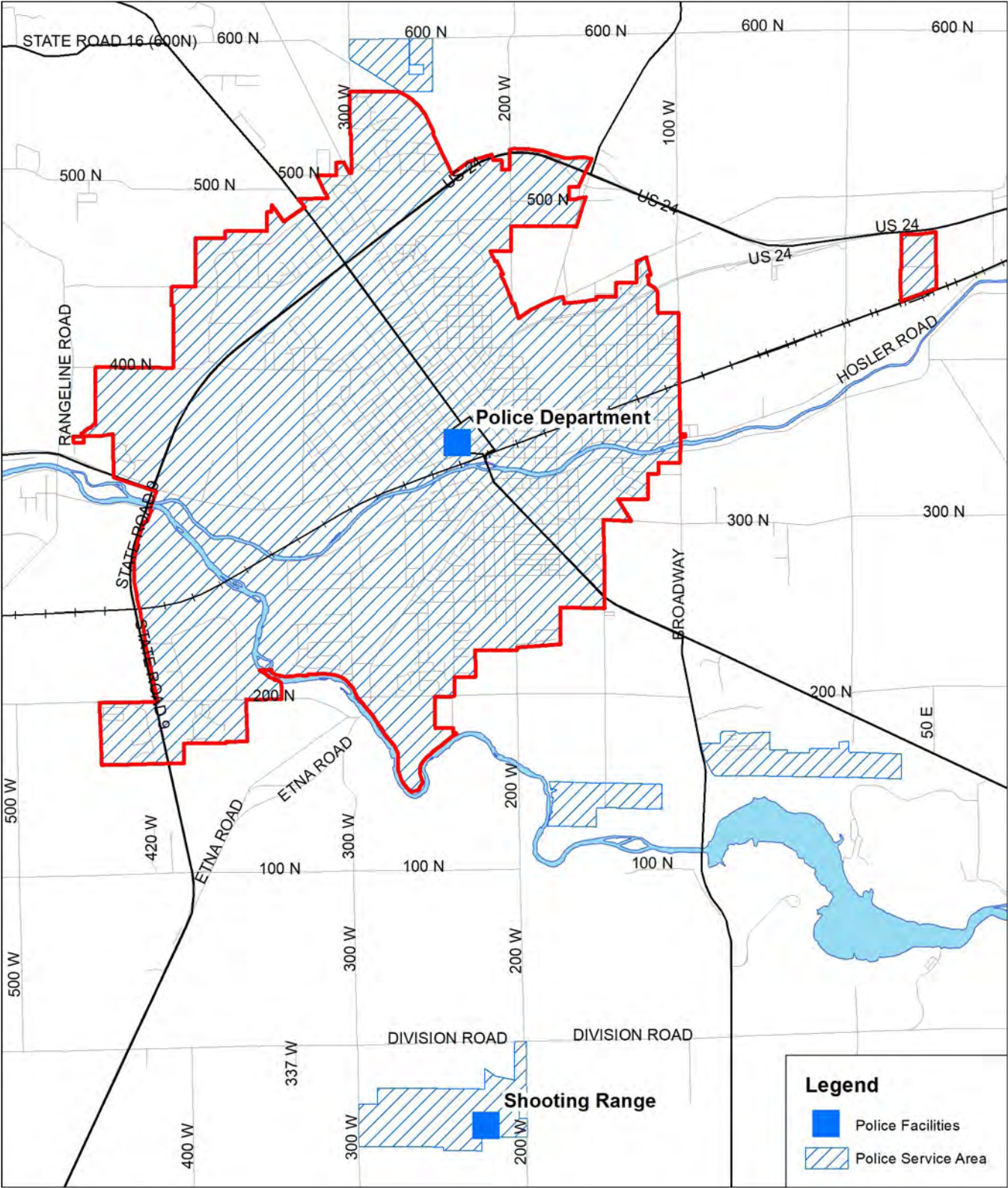
A map showing the location of City Services Department Facilities, City streets, and State and Federal roadways.





A map showing fire stations and fire service territory





A map showing police facilities and police service territory





## VI. DOWNTOWN

*“Downtown holds together the most varied mix of economic, civic, and social functions. It is the place where everyone can meet and interact, where monuments are located, where speeches are made, where parades are held, and people are entertained. More than anything else, downtown gives a community its collective identity and thus its pride.”*

*-Richard Moe and Carter Wilkie  
Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl-*



## A. Introduction

The downtown represents the heart and soul of a community to both its residents and visitors. People are affected by the physical conditions of downtown and draw conclusions about the City's commitment to community and public pride from what they see and experience within the city center. The City of Huntington and its partners, Main Street Huntington and the Downtown Business Association, have a developed focus on downtown. The City has been an Indiana Main Street Community since 2010 and offers a Commercial Façade & Roof Grant Program in the downtown core.

The 2012 Downtown Visioning Initiative has provided a blueprint for the future of downtown, in directing resources and capital into several significant projects and public improvements. The plan was developed by a group of urban planning students from Ball State University, commissioned by Main Street Huntington and overseen by a thirteen member steering committee. The project focused on streetscape design, repurposing existing structures, and increasing overall visual appeal. In all, the plan calls for numerous improvements that represent the public and private sector's commitment to downtown.



*Downtown looking north on Jefferson Street*

The plan centers around six main areas intended to be catalysts for the downtown. Enjoying downtown includes activities for visitors and residents alike, including activities that incorporate art into the downtown landscape, tourism activities, recreational amenities, and multiple locations to enjoy shopping and dining downtown. Living downtown requires the establishment of multiple housing types for all segments of the population. Primarily lofts, apartments, and townhouses are desired by the current population. Learning downtown weighs the establishment of cultural and lifelong learning opportunities. Working downtown includes increasing the current number of employment opportunities, primarily by developing a strategy to attract office uses to the downtown. Moving around downtown requires that the City provide adequate infrastructure and information so that all modes of transportation can successfully navigate downtown. Placemaking activities in the downtown include creating design guidelines to protect the look and feel, creating linkages to other areas outside of downtown, incorporating parks and open space, and being considerate of ecology and sustainability. The most unifying factor from the plan is the genuine desire to develop the riverfront in a manner that leads to increased activity downtown and substantially improves the quality of life for the entire City.

The downtown of Huntington, like any community, is often fragile without continued attention, coordination, management, and reinvestment. Downtown areas can easily slide into decline while retail trends, physical deterioration, traffic congestion and other factors determine the desirability of downtown. The goals and objectives identified in this chapter have been established in order to offer a bold strategy for the development and revitalization challenges facing downtown. When implemented, these opportunities will provide elevated economic opportunities for the entire downtown area. Cities that take an aggressive position on downtown redevelopment as a mixed use environment find that they can change the perception of a place through quality development, marketing, promotion, retention, and recruitment activities.

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

### **• Goals**

1. The City of Huntington will strive to create a downtown that combines its historic past with a vibrant future.
2. It will include a thriving retail environment, multiple professional services, a variety of residential living choices, convenient municipal facilities, and countless entertainment venues.
3. Downtown Huntington will be the center for culture and the arts, thereby acting as a magnet for residents and visitors who will experience its regional tourism opportunities.
4. Huntington will become a community that will experience increases in property values across all segments. Population will increase as residents move into the newly revitalized heart of Huntington.
5. Huntington will strive to exemplify quality buildings, public spaces, streetscapes, and urban design within a mixed use environment in order to ensure an appealing and vibrant downtown.

### **• Objectives**

The overarching objective for the downtown is to develop solutions that support revitalization of the downtown and contribute to its vibrancy, character, and economic viability through the pursuit of the following objectives:

1. Develop a streetscape and wayfinding system that reinforces the image and relationship of downtown Huntington with the rest of the community.
2. Consider open space elements and areas that create a more naturalized environment in order to create a balanced visual appeal.
3. Provide incentives for new and existing businesses to take advantage of downtown locations.
4. Provide continued support, encouragement, and incentives to make residential living in the downtown area a top priority.
5. Develop a plan to recruit traditional and non-traditional anchor tenants suitable for downtown in order to increase the marketability of underutilized downtown space.
6. Evaluate downtown parking and develop a parking plan for downtown, with a focus on increasing parking options and optimizing parking locations.
7. Encourage new attractions for people downtown to experience, thereby creating a vibrancy that can sustain activity beyond traditional business hours.
8. Prioritize downtown infrastructure improvements in order to facilitate downtown streetscape development.
9. Encourage community participation in downtown planning activities.
10. Encourage entrepreneurship, new business recruitment, and retention of existing businesses.

## C. Key Organizations

### • Issues and Findings

Multiple organizations throughout Huntington are involved in guiding downtown development, marketing, and promotion. Recently, the City of Huntington has come to rely upon Main Street Huntington (MSH) as the primary organization responsible for downtown revitalization. Main Street Huntington provides leadership and direction to the City regarding multiple aspects of downtown. In addition to the groups and organizations listed on the following pages, several institutions located downtown provide vision and knowledge to the City for the benefit of the downtown. The primary organizations engaged in downtown visioning are:

#### Main Street Huntington

As listed in its mission statement, “Main Street Huntington is driven by passion for the downtown and the willingness to volunteer energy to grow the initiative into a culture of positive change and appreciation within the community”. Main Street Huntington strives to work in conjunction with local government, industry, and citizens to improve the downtown in a manner that best serves the community as a whole. Despite its relatively short existence, Main Street Huntington is an award winning Indiana Main Street community. With a focus on the four point approach of the Indiana Main Street program, Main Street Huntington strives to bring about positive change through design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring.

The Main Street program creates opportunities for investment through public/private partnerships, the most notable of these being grant programs available for façade and roof improvements. In addition, the organization also engages in short and long term planning as it relates to downtown.

## MAIN STREET HUNTINGTON



#### Downtown Merchants Association

Business owners of the downtown have been meeting for a number of years to collaborate on projects, share resources, and better the business environment of downtown Huntington. The business owners plan a number of popular events each year in the downtown, all aimed at encouraging patrons to shop locally. The Downtown Merchants Association spurred the creation of Main Street Huntington through a renewed focus on downtown revitalization.

#### Huntington County Chamber of Commerce

The Huntington County Chamber of Commerce is the organization that represents nearly 350 business members throughout Huntington County. The chamber offers a variety of programs, incentives, networking, and training programs to businesses and professionals. The chamber is an advocate for a strong downtown and supports the efforts being undertaken by Main Street Huntington through promotion and other assistance.





### **Huntington County Economic Development Corporation**

The Huntington County Economic Development Corporation (HCED) is an organization that works to improve the industrial environment and employment opportunities in Huntington County by assisting corporations in the areas of retention and expansion of existing businesses, attracting new businesses and investment, and continuing to develop the workforce through education and training programs. Huntington County Economic Development is a community partner of Main Street Huntington and continues to support their ongoing efforts. For more information on Huntington County Economic Development, please refer to the Economic Development Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.



### **Huntington County Visitors & Convention Bureau**

With the primary mission of promoting tourism within Huntington County, the Huntington County Visitors & Convention Bureau (HCVCB) maintains a storefront in downtown Huntington. The organization is responsible for showcasing the attractions and amenities of Huntington County as a whole. This multifaceted approach includes recreational amenities, entertainment, dining, shopping, museums, and festivals. The Visitor & Convention Bureau is an active Main Street Huntington Partner, assisting and supporting primarily in the area of community branding. For more information on the Huntington County Visitors & Convention Bureau, please refer to the Economic Development Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.



## **• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Continue and expand strategic partnerships with economic development and tourism organizations that allow for development, redevelopment, educational, and promotional opportunities.
2. Identify and target specific real estate development opportunities and the type of tenants and uses that match each opportunity. Collaboration and plan formulation in order to identify desired and supportable uses that are appropriate with downtown should be the focal point of a tenant retention and recruitment strategy. The strategy should pay careful attention to the types of businesses that are needed to support residential living in the downtown.
3. Continue to build upon the recently implemented “Do More Huntington” marketing campaign in order to attract customers and visitors to the downtown. A fresh branded image of downtown Huntington will help attract notoriety and reinvigorate its identity.



## D. Built and Natural Environment

### • Issues and Findings

#### Built Environment

Huntington's city center is a classic example of the quintessential American downtown. The central business district is comprised of approximately six blocks along Jefferson Street and broadens out one block west to Cherry Street and one and a half blocks east to the alley between Warren and Guilford Streets. The area stretches from Tipton Street on the north to the Little River on the south. In all, the core is approximately twelve square blocks in area. Downtown features a number of one-way streets, the most predominate being State Road 5/U.S. 224 which splits one-way traffic around the heart of downtown, with northbound traffic occupying Warren Street and southbound traffic routed along Cherry Street. The roadway splits at Rotary Centennial Park, the northern gateway to downtown, and at the twin bridges over the Little River. The Little River serves as the defining physical feature for the southern edge of downtown.

A larger downtown planning area extends around the central business district approximately two blocks in all directions and provides walkable neighborhoods, government facilities, churches, and access to other districts within Huntington. This strategic planning area is comprised of approximately 33 square blocks and straddles the Little River and Jefferson Street corridor.



*The Central Business District and Downtown Planning Area*

#### Urban Design Principles

The economic and cultural development of downtown should be guided by a holistic list of urban design principles. When followed, these principles can help guide the individuals, organizations, and governmental entities involved in the revitalization of Huntington's urban heart. The following principles ensure sound decision-making, with regard to the complex issues surrounding downtown. Appropriate principles include:

- Strategic Development Program
  - Market-driven leasing goals and development.
  - A repositioning strategy with calculated economic enhancement objectives.
  - A strategic action plan designed for implementation.
  - Recognition of downtown organizational capacity & capabilities for implementation of the plan.
- Development of Key Activity Centers or Districts
  - Offers shopping and entertainment destinations.
  - Characterized by a diversity of environment, people, and culture.
  - Celebrate the history of the district and community.

- Unique characteristics evident in leasing opportunities as well as environment.
- Innovative urban housing opportunities.
- Pedestrian Friendly Environment
  - Safe & secure—day & night.
  - Promotes pedestrian circulation and discovery along streets and alleyways.
- Unique Personality and Sense of Place
  - Capitalizes on the strengths of the district.
  - Character & qualities derived from the collection of historic buildings.
  - Encouragement of creative and complimentary new in-fill buildings in street voids.
  - Integration of existing, uniquely physical characteristics.
- Visually Exciting Environment
  - Reduction of visual chaos and clutter.
  - Integration of quality storefront, signage, and streetscape components.
  - Development of quality wayfinding and public art programs.
- Encouragement of Mixed Use Development
  - Unique upper story housing, office, and high tech development.
  - Creative new in-fill development.
- Linked Integrally to Adjacent Neighborhoods and Business Districts
  - Pedestrian, vehicular, and alternative transportation corridors.
  - Attention to arterial access corridors.
- Public/Private Partnering
  - Real estate development opportunities fostered through cooperation and shared vision.
  - Innovative public & private development partnerships.
  - Sound economic strategies for implementation.
- Carefully Crafted Development Standards
  - Based on a flexible strategic vision and plan with appropriate design assistance & review boards.
  - Special zoning & user friendly and custom design guidelines.
- Market, Market, Market
  - Quality downtown marketing programs for visitors, tenants, and developers.
  - Educate the region to the qualities and discoveries of downtown.

### **Parking**

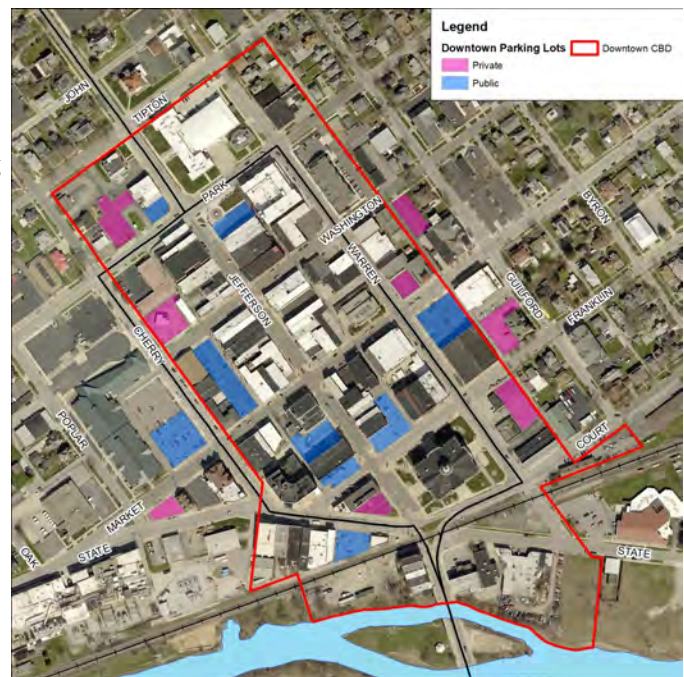
Parking is a critical component of Huntington's future downtown development; it should not detract from intrinsic qualities like a pedestrian friendly environment and a unique sense of place. Parking should be viewed as a supportive tool to help make downtown attractions easier to access. Although too much surface parking tends to detract from the urban qualities and pedestrian activity in a downtown, Huntington is a smaller community that appears to either need more parking or have its parking areas more strategically located. Like many historic downtowns, it has made use of virtually every available opportunity to create parking on underutilized land. Inner block and on-street parking areas have also been established in virtually every conceivable location. A number of off-street parking facilities experience high levels of utilization, while some are near empty most days, illustrating the potential need for locations and strategic parking partnerships to be evaluated.

Currently there are a number of off-street surface parking lots, both public and private, as shown in the map to the right. Parking spaces in the lots are typically leased monthly. A number of the lots, located in high demand areas, are consistently full and require a waiting list. Parking has undergone many changes in recent years with increased development opportunities downtown. As of 2019, a downtown parking plan is underway.

### Natural Environment

The most predominate natural feature of the downtown area is at the southern boundary where the Little River bisects the downtown planning area. A majority of the buildings on the north side back the river, while properties on the southern side are less isolated from it. While such a large part of the downtown, the river is a unique area that has yet to be fully capitalized upon as an amenity. Due to the density of downtown, there are not many natural features or greenspace elements present. Most of the downtown streets have some form of landscaping, such as street trees or planter boxes.

Huntington is an active Tree City USA community. There are a few underdeveloped lots in the downtown area that have landscaping, but most buildings are built up to property lines, leaving little space for vegetation. Typically, business owners plant flowers in hanging planters from street lights and place potted plants next to the entrances of their buildings.



*A map showing available public and private parking lots*

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Encourage the development and redevelopment of properties in the downtown area that are context sensitive. Pursue tenants that are suitable for the vision of downtown and goals of the comprehensive plan.
2. Revisit zoning classifications and permitted uses in a manner that is custom tailored to the downtown and allows the flexibility required to perpetuate original densities and uses.
3. Promote mixed use development in a manner that expands economic development opportunities and brings a variety of compatible uses together under a single roof.
4. Strongly encourage the development of downtown housing opportunities. Incorporating residential living is possibly the most important development strategy that Huntington can make in order to reinvest in its downtown. Housing should include the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock and the addition of alternative urban housing options.
5. Implement appropriate elements of the 2019 Downtown Parking Study.



## E. Aesthetics

### • Issues and Findings

Downtown Huntington's beauty begins with the collection of historic buildings located throughout the CBD. The buildings were primarily constructed in the late 1800's and feature ornate details, despite some currently being hidden behind faux facades. Collectively, these buildings, as well as more modern structures, create an aesthetically pleasing main street environment. New urbanism trends that are becoming mainstream across the United States merge architectural aesthetics into new real estate development projects in an attempt to replicate high quality architecture of exemplary places like downtown Huntington. As a whole, downtown Huntington is vibrant, genuine, and full of opportunities which should be further developed in order to regain maximum economic benefit.

Unique to Huntington is the natural corridor linkage of the Little River that borders the southern edge of downtown. This area has the potential to serve as a regional recreational trail connection, if linked to a larger trail network. Opportunities to engage the riverfront into the downtown from a marketing and promotion perspective should be explored as a priority. The heart of the downtown is lacking green and open space and consequently, some areas of downtown appear uninviting. Introducing more greenspace to downtown will help to create a more aesthetically pleasing experience.



*A conceptual drawing of a downtown building after rehab*

Other aesthetic issues which need to be addressed in the core of downtown Huntington are:

- Implement the recommendations found in the Huntington Downtown Revitalization Study
- Develop more detailed development standards to ensure uniform development patterns and themes.
- Coordinate recommendations with respect to facades, signage, and lighting incentives for storefronts.
- Identify opportunities for public art and greenspace development.
- Consider maintenance needs and develop a long term approach to ensure maintenance is completed.

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Revisit development standards in conjunction with the downtown zoning classes in order to ensure that new development and redevelopment are consistent in appearance and character to the historic buildings throughout downtown. Building heights and scales should match those of existing adjacent structures. Maintain as much building line along the street as is practical and use a landscaped edge when set back.
2. Encourage ornate facades and windowed storefronts that create an inviting atmosphere along the sidewalk and duplicate the historic building stock.
3. The backs of buildings should be functional, attractive, and identifiable; but remain service oriented.

## F. Retail

### • Issues and Findings

Retail in the downtown is fairly limited, with most retail establishments servicing specialty or niche markets. Due to the size of Huntington, available space, and competition with more traditional retail areas, it is unlikely that downtown will be considered for a traditional or chain retail establishment. The trade area for Huntington, or any community for that matter, will only support so much retail and restaurant development. This leaves the downtown primed for growth in the areas of niche retail and one of a kind dining establishments. Downtown is currently experiencing high levels of growth in terms of new business development, including restaurants, performing arts, specialty shops, and professional establishments. Several reasons have contributed to this growth, including the low cost of property, development incentives/grants, and a renewed devotion to downtown by the community as a whole.



*A new retail business in downtown Huntington*

Downtown will continue to grow as a district, this success will likely continue due to several factors:

- Strong specialty/niche retail establishments, many of which have been multi-generational businesses.
- Non-retail destinations that bring potential customers downtown such as: government offices, banks, post office, museum, theatre, and service businesses.
- Promotion of the downtown by Main Street Huntington, through its events, advertisement, and coordination.
- The convenient location of downtown, located in the center of Huntington.
- Historic architecture and linkages to other areas of interest that provides a stimulating environment and identity.

Assistance to small businesses should be provided by way of aggressively pursuing mixed use projects that include a significant residential redevelopment element, allowing downtown to draw more customers in by creating a market need to service residents. Downtown Huntington must further invest in itself by identifying the retail types that are supportable and currently lacking in downtown. It must focus on attracting these types of businesses in a supportable size and scale. To ensure that a sufficient number of retail options are provided, it must also identify the ideal retail/tenant mixture that is applicable for downtown Huntington.

Downtown was once the commercial hub and social center for the City of Huntington. It was not only the primary location for government and finance, but also had the main concentration of destination retail stores



*New food and drink opportunities in the downtown*

that attracted shoppers from throughout the County. Since the advent of the automobile, modern subdivision, and big-box retail, the commercial hub has moved north along Jefferson Street and U.S. 24. It is unrealistic to think that downtown could compete with this high growth commercial area. Therefore it must continue to reinvent itself as a destination that features specialty/niche shops, professional services, entertainment, and other desirable amenities.

Downtown Huntington is beginning to experience upward success as the arts and entertainment center for the community. Growing retail competition along modern commercial corridors will continue to apply pressure on downtown. However, a holistic mixed use development strategy for downtown will allow downtown to focus less emphasis on traditional retail and concentrate efforts on quality not quantity. In addition to the expected uses in downtown such as finance, government, and office; downtown continues to garner more attention as a destination retail district.

The new and modest success as a destination is because of several key factors; the success of the retail and arts/entertainment in downtown will play a significant role in creating a strong demand for other development and mixed use projects in or near downtown, such as residential, live/work spaces, and offices. Downtown Huntington has benefited from its high quality historic building stock, its location, and its concentration of unique and quality businesses.

## • **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Strengthen the long-term sustainability of downtown retail by: promoting retail and dining as entertainment, increased appeal to younger consumers (18-40 years old), featuring unique merchandise and services to complement area shopping centers, offering merchandise at a reasonable and moderate price point, extending hours of operations, and supporting mixed use projects and residential development.
2. Help strengthen independent businesses, resulting in increased profitability and market penetration of existing businesses in order to help compete with chain retail. Providing independent businesses with market information, business district management and promotion, and small business assistance can help to increase their overall performance.
3. Main Street Huntington and the Downtown Business Association must continue to manage and promote downtown, while working to identify the right mixture and critical mass of retail. This will lead to business expansion opportunities for existing businesses. Business retention and recruitment is a necessary component of an overall retail strategy.
4. Encouraging community participation and action can help to ensure that local businesses regain and retain their role in a healthy local economy. Public awareness is the first step in getting the public and businesses to understand issues. Then the public stakeholders can be mobilized to promote independent businesses and encourage local consumers to patronize local establishments.
5. Support programs that seek to make use of empty storefronts in a manner that provide an alternative to empty buildings and vacant storefronts. Historical or art displays could be utilized to create a visually stimulating look that is inviting to residents and visitors.



## G. Connectivity and Accessibility

### • Issues and Findings

Connectivity and accessibility can be defined as vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian pathways which connect adjoining neighborhoods and destinations. These connections join the neighborhoods, districts, and services of one area of the community to another. One of the priority goals of this City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan is to build a connected system of roads, bike routes, trails, and sidewalks. A main objective of the plan is to create neighborhoods and areas built on the model of older neighborhoods with walkable streets, connectivity, and replicable densities.

Alternative transportation systems must continue to be developed to further connect downtown to its contiguous neighborhoods. Providing non-traditional transportation infrastructure and elements is an important initiative to implement as well. The goal of the plan also addresses that the outer edges of Huntington should both be clearly delineated and well defined in order to create identifiable and welcoming community boundaries that provide a clear sense of arrival. This plan further calls for gateways and community centers of Huntington, to enhance connectivity and interface between the community and region.



*The new Little River Trail just south of Downtown*

Accessibility can be viewed from different perspectives, such as the accessibility of a particular location, group, or activity. It is important to specify the perspective being considered when describing and evaluating accessibility. A location may be very accessible by automobile but not by walking, and so it is difficult to reach for the non-motoring public. A building may have adequate automobile access, but poor access for delivery and service trucks, and so it is suitable for certain types of land use activities, but not others.

Identifying linkage opportunities that will offer Huntington residents alternative transportation options and connectivity between neighborhoods and downtown is important. Vehicular transportation servicing downtown continues to be both dedicated and incidental. It is also complex and intimidating to first time visitors, due to the one-way streets and mixture of local and state/federal roadways. While the capacity of the transportation network appears to be of sufficient size for handling growth, it is very dedicated to the automobile. In order to provide multiple options, alternative transportation systems should be explored, and improved pedestrian paths, trails, sidewalks, and ancillary amenities should be provided in order to improve access in downtown.

While downtown is primarily a location experienced by residents, its location along and at the intersection of multiple major roadways creates a regional opportunity for tourism and economic prosperity. In order to capitalize on this unique location, downtown Huntington must continue to identify its role on a larger scale, not just as a location on a map. It is well positioned to rebrand itself as a unique destination and capture the benefits of potential guests, as illustrated in the regional positioning map on the following page.

Of importance to downtown, is the connectivity to other business districts (primarily the North of the Bypass District) and adjacent neighborhoods. Aesthetic improvements to Jefferson Street will continue to improve connectivity by creating a seamless and comfortable link from the downtown to other areas of the community.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Identify and develop linkage opportunities within the existing downtown area and actively promote the downtown as an ideal location for new businesses. Opportunities should be pursued to link parks and open space via trails, greenways, and bike routes; thereby integrating open space as a key component of the downtown character and quality of life. Convenient vehicular and alternative transportation from surrounding neighborhoods to the downtown core is vital to the long term sustainability of downtown. Amenities should be provided to accommodate these alternative transportation options, such as bicycle racks.
2. Downtown should carefully study its pedestrian circulation in order to guide future development and promote an urban, mixed use, and walkable environment that is in contrast to current auto-dependent development patterns. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation will enhance the appeal of downtown while preserving natural and cultural assets. Trails and on-street linkages will create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages and abilities with attractive, safe, and accessible places to bike, jog, and walk. In doing so, downtown can gain economically, socially, and environmentally, all the while providing services for a more active community.
3. Revisit land use and development patterns in a manner that will lead to a more aesthetically pleasing image when entering and exiting the downtown by gradually transitioning between land uses. In addition, dedicated routes used by visitors to access the downtown should be evaluated to ensure that the most appropriate routes are utilized.





A map showing downtown in relationship to the roads, trails, and bike routes that connect it to the rest of Huntington



## H. Arts and Culture

### • Issues and Findings

Arts and culture are the primary advantages that downtown has over the other business and retail areas in Huntington. Unlike the North of the Bypass District, which is retail and chain restaurant driven, downtown offers broad consumer appeal through a historic mixed use experience. Retail and restaurants are complimented by art and culture through the relationships of entertainment venues and events. The Huntington City-Township Public Library, and the Huntington County Historical Society Museum for example, far exceed the offerings of a modern shopping center.

Promotion of the arts and cultural events in downtown Huntington is of utmost importance to the overall sustainability of downtown. Events such as Heritage Days, the Chalk Walk, and JeFFFest continually draw residents and visitors downtown to experience all it has to offer. The soon to be opened Community Arts Center and recently completed community arts plan will help propel arts to a new level in the community and especially downtown.



*The new Chalk Walk event held downtown every summer*

In order to continue to benefit from these venues and events, downtown must address the following:

- Continued promotion and development of arts, culture, and heritage downtown.
- Increased accessibility to a variety of cultural activities that enhance the cultural attraction of downtown.
- Provide direct cultural services through museums, venues, and events that support the cultural community.
- Integrate and use arts and culture as a resource for economic development.
- Promote the City's arts and culture to residents, visitors, and to civic and community leadership as an integral aspect of the City's identity, quality of life, economic vitality, and civic health.

### **Faith-based cultural experience**

The collection of religious institutions that border the downtown provide a faith-based cultural experience that accentuates the business and residential community of the downtown area. By building upon this cultural foundation, downtown Huntington can illustrate the diverse environment of the greater downtown area and influence the ancillary uses on its fringe that make downtown livable.

### **Festivals**

Huntington is home to a number of diverse and entertaining festivals and events. Many of these attractions happen within or are centered around the downtown area. The largest being Huntington Heritage Days, a nearly two-week historically themed festival that focuses on a diverse number of events in order to engage the community and raise cultural heritage awareness. Events include a parade, marketplace, car show, award ceremonies and other attractions deeply rooted in tradition that both unify and entertain the community. Other notable downtown community events include the annual Chalk Walk, Music in the City, and hydrant painting.

**LaFontaine Arts Council**

The Lafontaine Arts Council is an organization dedicated to inspiring younger generations in their artistic endeavors. The downtown area is utilized by the arts council in the promotion and execution of art events. The council is the lead sponsor of JeFFFest, an annual art auction featuring jazz music, food tasting, and a silent auction of locally painted canvasses; it is one of the fastest growing downtown events. The Huntington Arts Initiative is currently working to rehabilitate and renovate the buildings at the corner of Market and Warren Streets to create a home for the arts in the downtown. The group plans to utilize space in the building to house a professional public art gallery and support space to local organizations. The group's mission includes the beautification of the downtown area through art projects, such as theme painted fire hydrants. Long term plans to expand art offerings in the downtown include exterior murals, painted alleyways, and interior exhibit spaces.

**Community Arts Center**

Opening in mid-2019, the Community Arts Center will be located in the mixed-use UB Block redevelopment on the north side of the Courthouse. It will feature private studio space and instructional space for training in various types of art utilizing a number of mediums. The space will also be home to culinary arts featuring a commercial kitchen and limited storefront, a gallery featuring an event stage for performances, and artists in residence.

**The Huntington County Historical Society Museum**

Organized in 1925 and incorporated in 1985, the Historical Museum offers a unique look at the history of Huntington County. Its convenient downtown location allows visitors to trace the history of Huntington from its roots with Miami Indians and French settlers to present day. In 1999 the museum was relocated from the fourth floor of the Courthouse to its present 8,000 square foot facility that features exhibits from every local history era.

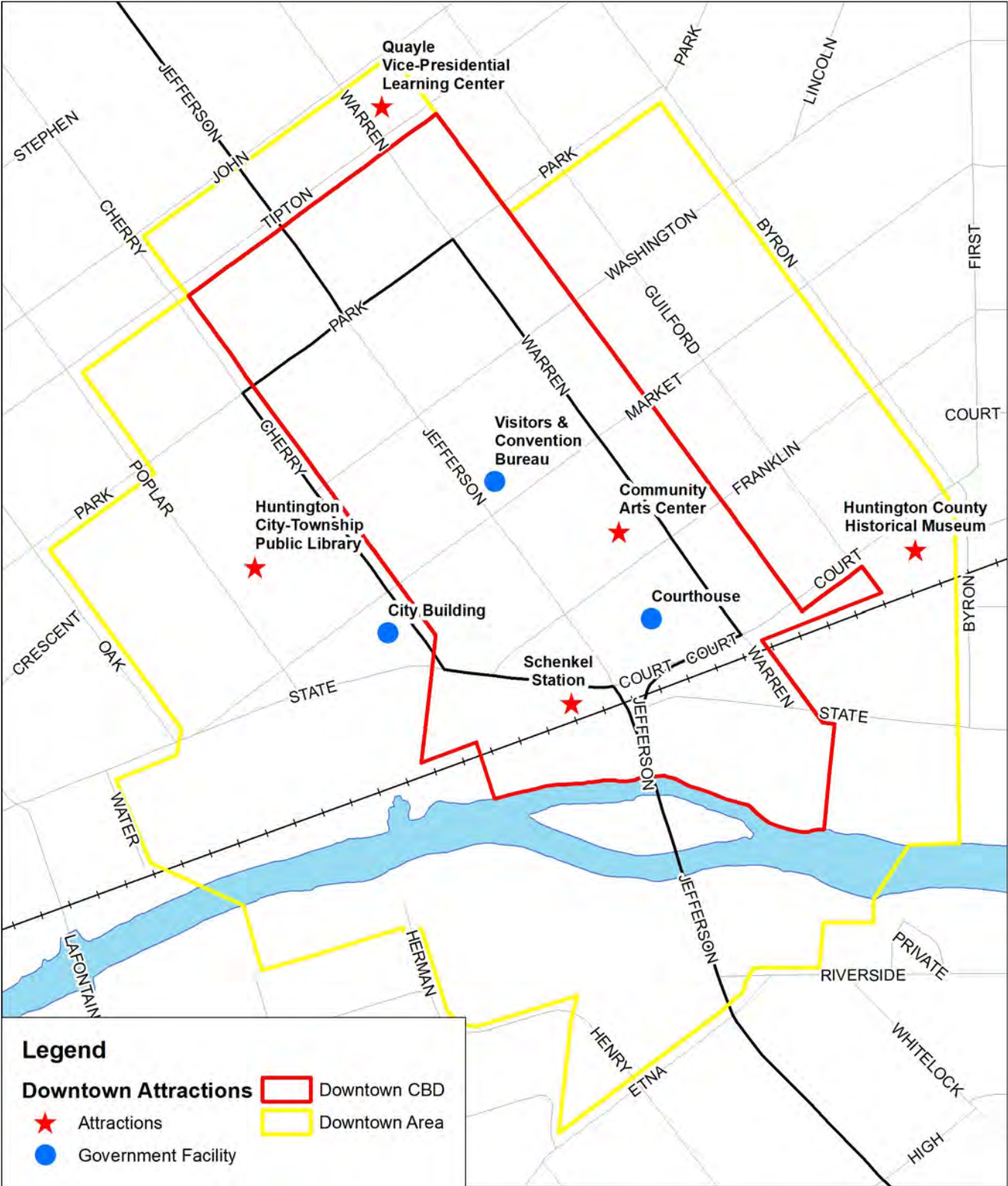
**Entertainment**

At the present time, Huntington has no well-defined live entertainment district. Downtown Huntington only contains a few scattered establishments that host live entertainment, aside from those previously mentioned. Most of these locations feature local and regional bands which perform shows on the weekend or for events.

**• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Support the implementation of appropriate elements from the Community Arts Plan, as updated.
2. Continue to support and promote art and cultural events in downtown Huntington. Foster genuine commitments from stakeholders to support the development of the arts and culture within the downtown.
3. Continue the promotion, operation, and administration of the museums, historic sites, and art facilities to offer entertainment opportunities to residents and visitors. Encourage public art projects in public and private developments, all the while continuing annual public art programs. Promote the collaboration among arts organizations, the downtown, the City of Huntington, and other stakeholders.
4. Continue and expand the marketing and promotion of Huntington's arts and cultural events. Assist residents and visitors in their desire to participate with Huntington's institutions and initiatives. Encourage the location of new and expanding cultural facilities along major corridors, and work to support the development of institutions. Coordinate the marketing of arts and cultural activities with downtown partners and print media.





Downtown attractions, as promoted by the Huntington County Visitors and Convention Bureau



## VII. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*“Government doesn't create jobs, it only creates the conditions that make jobs more or less likely”*

*-Mitch Daniels  
former Governor, Indiana-*





## A. Introduction

Local economic development is the process of building an economic base for the community's future. It is a collaborative, systematic process used to make the community a better place to live and work. It is a community-wide effort to nurture, enhance, and preserve the economic vitality of our citizens. The primary revenue source available to local governments is derived from the economic activity and vitality of the private sector; private economic decisions determine the degree of public benefit. The stronger and more prosperous the private sector, the stronger the municipal tax base will be as a result. A healthy and thriving economy is fundamental to developing and maintaining a balanced and sustainable tax base. The economic base should be sufficiently diversified to reduce the impact of economic downturn, yet focused enough to encourage the retention, expansion, and attraction of businesses who can benefit from one another. As a result, a community's long-term sustainability depends on a sound and diverse local economy.



*Groundbreaking for the \$35M CSP Expansion in 2017*

The City of Huntington has experienced a slight population decline in recent years. In order to encourage population growth, Huntington must continue to work towards expanding its economic opportunities and increasing its quality of life in order to be an attractive place to live and work. The individual successes of new residents and businesses will eventually contribute to the economic base available to finance local government services. The private sector and those people who live and work in Huntington are some of our most valuable assets; both of which must be invested in to yield the best results. Local public policies should be crafted in order to encourage the creation of new jobs and capital investment opportunities.

The City of Huntington is fortunate to have recently completed a number of projects with even more on the horizon. Private projects continue to come to fruition, representing significant capital investment on behalf of those who seek to do business in Huntington. Public projects to maintain, upgrade, and create new infrastructure amenities, and public spaces in support of economic development are occurring continually. Current efforts to revitalize downtown Huntington have never been stronger, and in turn will help to encourage other economic development efforts across the City.

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan will address promoting a secure economic base through industrial, office, retail and tourism development; downtown revitalization; and economic incentives. Although Huntington is currently benefiting from record economic development successes, the long-term vitality of the area will depend on its ability to continue to enhance its business environment and build its economic base. Not only will the City and surrounding areas need to provide job opportunities in order to fuel local economic growth and attract residents, but it must also generate a marketable workforce, with adequate skill development and training opportunities. Huntington can fortify its economy through ongoing investments in local labor, products, and services. Additionally, the City must continue to generate fiscal income that is derived from non-residential land uses in order to support the services that it provides to Huntington County as a whole.

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

- **Goals**

1. The City's economic base will be diversified and expanded in order to create a variety of employment opportunities, encourage additional investment, and stimulate wealth to support quality of life. The City, County, and HCED must continue to work cooperatively in regards to economic development, recognizing that any development is beneficial to every stakeholder and creative problem solving is a must. The City will coordinate with HCED, the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street, and the Visitors and Convention Bureau to build an expandable and unrivaled tax base with an appropriate mix of business and industry through aggressive recruitment, retention, and incentive strategies. The City will coordinate workforce and career development programs with appropriate agencies and institutions in order to ensure a skilled labor force.

- **Objectives**

1. Plan for and guide future industrial, commercial, office, technology, mixed use, redevelopment, and tourism opportunities in a manner that provides the most efficient and logical use of land and other resources.
2. Further diversify and expand the existing tax base through public policies which enhance economic opportunities for the private sector and improve the quality of life for residents to create a renewed vibrancy.
3. Continue to implement existing and formulate new and unique incentive programs that attract and sustain businesses of a wide variety in the local community.
4. Expand upon past successes in "home grown" businesses and attracting and fostering entrepreneurial spirit in a supportive environment that leads to success for both the business and the community.
5. Improve the quality and variety of retail, commercial, and service businesses through land use strategies and zoning reform policies throughout the City of Huntington.
6. Encourage office uses where appropriate, while remaining cognizant of what the local market will support.
7. Continue to aggressively market sites and buildings available within Huntington, while filling an existing void in the promotion of non-industrial and small industrial sites and buildings to prospective businesses.
8. Continue an emphasis on industrial development, with a focus on advanced technology, manufacturing, and warehousing. Technology related jobs will be encouraged to be located in a clustered environment.
9. Road, rail, aviation, utility, and advanced communication infrastructure improvements will be targeted in a manner that facilitates growth by providing businesses with resources to compete in the global economy.
10. Downtown will continue to be the focus for specialty retail, entertainment, cultural facilities, and civic uses through a unique district approach. This approach will allow a mixture of uses to co-exist and serve as an environment geared towards specific demographics.
11. Continue to develop and expand upon existing partnerships between local, regional, statewide, and public-private players in a manner which allows everyone to experience maximum benefits.



## C. Economic Base

### • Issues and Findings

#### Economic Structure

Huntington, like many other Midwestern communities, has experienced a significant shift in its economic base over the last few decades. Many twentieth century manufacturing jobs have been replaced by advanced technologies, reallocated across the border to Mexico, or are currently being performed in China at a more competitive rate. This has resulted in the local economy missing skilled, high-wage jobs that once formed the foundation of Huntington industry. Corporate competition has resulted in many local industries becoming parts of large conglomerates that then transfer corporate leadership positions to existing headquarters and in some cases retain existing local production facilities.

Huntington continues to be predominantly a manufacturing community, with a mixture of the manufacturing distributed between international, national, and start-up level industries. In addition to manufacturing, other leading industries are education, healthcare and social services, followed by retail trade; which represent nearly 65% of all industry occupations based upon the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). 2017 American Community Survey data, as shown in the table above, illustrates the impacts of and recovery from the Great Recession. A majority of the industries have recently experienced decreases, however education, health, and social services have grown by nearly 43%. Transportation and warehousing & utilities have grown by more than 32%. Recognizing that these are merely Census estimates, not too much should be drawn from these figures.

Industry Description	2000	2010	2017	% Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining, construction	464	576	534	-7.3%
Manufacturing	3,112	2,574	2,569	-0.2%
Wholesale trade	319	162	169	4.3%
Retail trade	996	907	831	-8.4%
Transportation and warehousing, utilities	311	262	347	32.4%
Information	199	161	97	-39.8%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	331	162	172	6.2%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services	279	444	342	-23.0%
Education, health and social services	1,687	1,389	1,983	42.8%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	573	779	836	7.3%
Other services (except public administration)	398	374	339	-9.4%
Public Administration	193	183	130	-29.0%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census, 2010 & 2017 ACS

#### Employment and Income

Persons of employment age (16 years of age and over) in the City of Huntington for the year 2000 was 9,337 and Huntington had an unemployment rate of 3.4%. For 2010, the City had 8,969 persons of employment age and an unemployment rate of 11.1% - at the height of the Great Recession. Employment aged persons in the City for 2017 was estimated to be 13,844 with a Huntington County unemployment rate of 3.8% for December 2018. These employment figures show just how much the labor market has recovered from the recession.

Geography	Unemployment Rate				
	2000	2010	2017	December 2018	% Change
United States	3.7%	10.8%	6.6%	4.1%	-37.9%
Indiana	3.3%	10.8%	6.1%	3.6%	-41.0%
Huntington County	2.7%	10.9%	3.9%	3.8%	-2.6%
City of Huntington	3.4%	11.1%	5.0%	N/A	N/A

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census, 2010 & 2017 ACS & Department of Workforce Development

## City of Huntington Employment Status, Occupation, and Industry 2000 - 2017

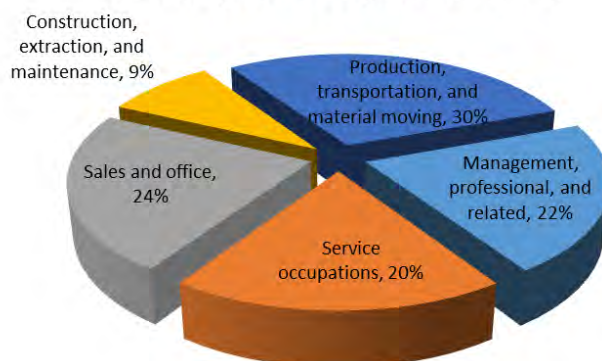
Employment Status						
	2000	%	2010	%	2017	%
Population 16 years and over	13,434	100%	13,538	100%	13,844	100%
In labor force	9,337	69.5%	8,969	66.3%	8,969	64.8%
Civilian labor force	9,324	69.4%	8,969	66.3%	8,969	64.8%
Employed	8,862	66.0%	7,973	58.9%	8,349	60.0%
Unemployed	462	3.4%	996	7.4%	440	3.1%
Armed forces	13	0.1%	0.0	0%	0	0%
Not in labor force	4,097	30.5%	4,569	33.7%	5,055	35.5%
Occupation						
	2000	%	2010	%	2017	%
Management, professional, and related occupations	1,798	20.2%	1,594	20.0%	1,769	22.2%
Service occupations	1,467	16.5%	1,491	18.7%	1,570	19.7%
Sales and office	1,903	21.4%	1,877	23.5%	1,876	23.5%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	679	7.6%	736	9.2%	723	9.1%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	3,008	33.9%	2,275	28.5%	2,411	30.2%
Industry						
	2000	%	2010	%	2017	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	52	0.5%	36	0.5%	76	0.9%
Construction	412	4.6%	540	6.8%	458	5.5%
Manufacturing	3,112	35.1%	2,574	32.3%	2,569	30.8%
Wholesale trade	319	3.5%	162	2.0%	169	2.0%
Retail trade	996	11.2%	907	11.4%	831	10.0%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	311	3.5%	262	3.3%	347	4.2%
Information	199	2.2%	161	2.0%	97	1.2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	331	3.7%	162	2.0%	172	2.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	279	3.1%	444	5.6%	342	4.1%
Education, health and social services	1,687	19.0%	1,389	17.4%	1,983	23.8%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	573	6.4%	779	9.8%	836	10.0%
Other services (except public administration)	398	4.4%	374	4.7%	339	4.1%
Public administration	193	2.1%	183	2.3%	130	1.6%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census, 2010 - 2017 American Community Survey

### Occupations

Huntington's top four occupational sectors in 2000 were production, transportation, and material moving at 34%, sales and office at 21%, management, professional and related at 20%, and service at 17%. These four occupations remained the largest groups in 2010 as well, with figures for production, transportation, and material moving at 29%, sales and office at 24%, management, professional and related at 20%, and service at 19%. Census 2017 estimates show the same four occupational dominance. In the last seven years, slight individual gains in management, professional and related occupations at 11%, and production, transportation, and material moving at 4% have been made according to 2010 and 2017 American Community Survey data.

**Huntington Occupations: 2017**

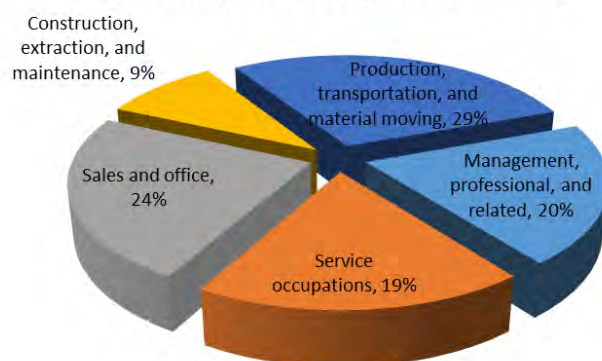


Source: US Census Bureau 2017 American Community Survey

### Industry

In 2000, approximately 54% of the labor force was employed by a manufacturing industry or within education, health and social services fields. These two industries combined declined to 49% in 2010 but rebounded to 55% in 2017 according to Census data. The increasing role of retail and technology jobs in an era when manufacturing has seen a slow and steady decline is evident, however manufacturing has always been the backbone of Huntington. One area where Huntington has been able to make some gains in recent years is in the transportation and warehousing and utilities industries, seeing a 27% increase from 2010 to 2017.

**Huntington Occupations: 2010**

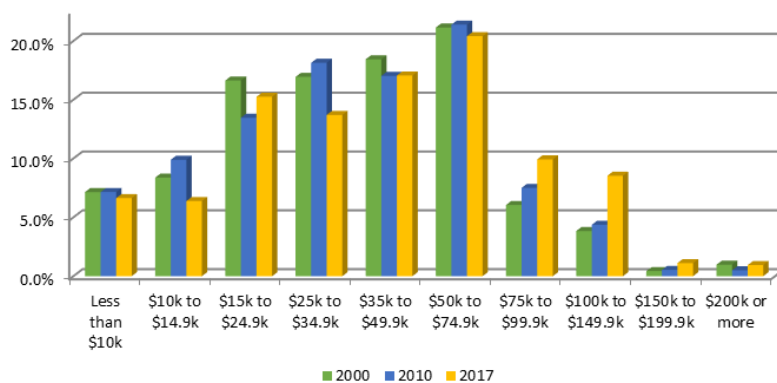


Source: US Census Bureau 2010 American Community Survey

### Income

In 2000, 56% of all households within the City earned between \$25,000 and \$74,999. That figure increased to 57% in 2010 but dropped to 51% in 2017. However wages of \$75,000 and up have been steadily increasing, illustrating that there are higher wage jobs available for those with the necessary qualifications. Similarly, median household income increased over 18% in the last seven years, from \$35,647 to \$42,302. Individually speaking, the single largest household income bracket for the City of Huntington has always been \$50,000 to \$74,999 as shown in the chart to the right.

**Huntington Household Income 2000-2010-2017**



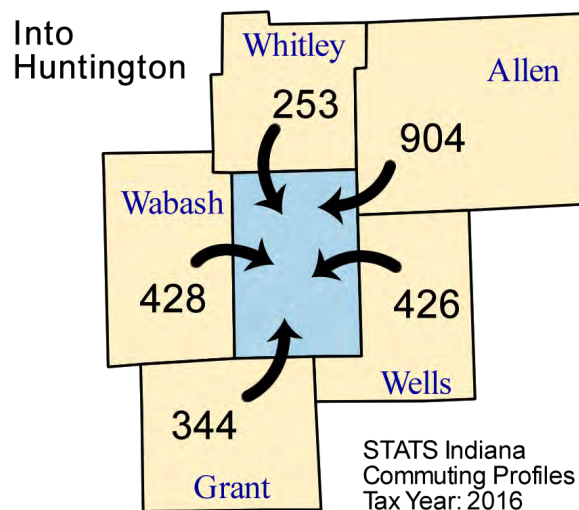
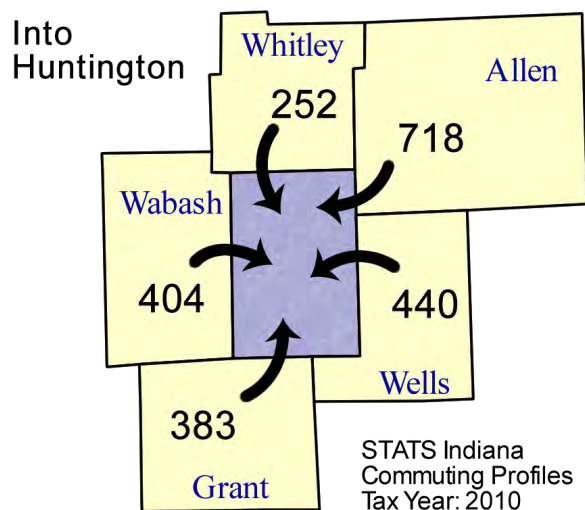
Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census, 2010 & 2017 ACS

### Workers Commute

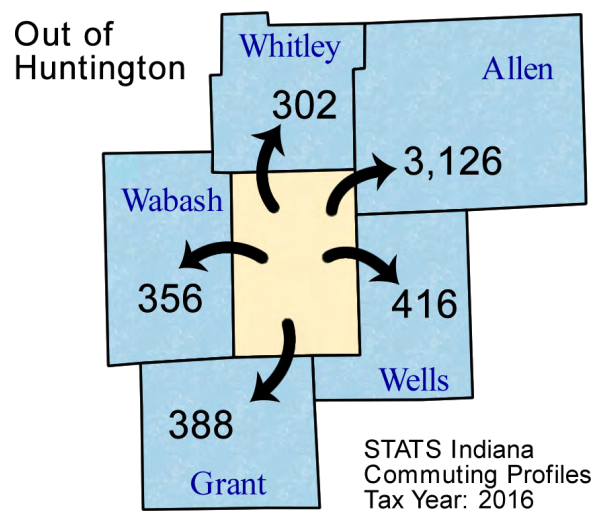
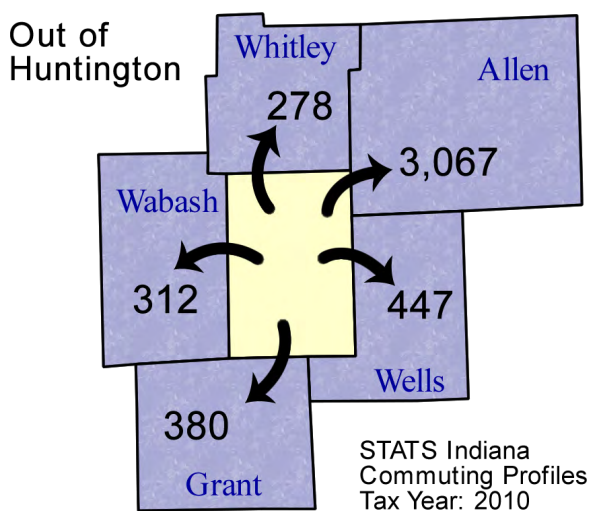
Like most Midwestern communities, a majority of Huntington's commuters are single commuters or participate in a group carpool. In Huntington 82.8% of workers commute to work by car, truck, or van as reported in the 2017 Census American Community Survey. Approximately 4.1% of Huntington County workers commuted outside of Huntington County for employment based upon Census 2017 figures. This is a decrease of 10.9% from 2010.

The maps below illustrate both in and out commuting patterns based upon 2010 and 2016 state income tax data. Data suggests that Huntington County workers commuting out of county for work has declined by 7.3%, but workers from surrounding counties commuting to Huntington for work has risen by 7.2%. While the most recent trends are encouraging, Huntington has essentially two ways to combat these commuting trends. It must offer an increased quality of life and amenities that appeal to the "in" commuters and make them want to live here. It must also promote policies which help employers increase employment opportunities within the county in order to reduce the number of "out" commuters who travel to neighboring counties for employment.

#### Workers from surrounding counties commuting into Huntington County (in):



#### Workers from Huntington County commuting into surrounding counties (out):





**Major Employers**

Huntington County is home to a number of key industry clusters, including: agriculture, automotive parts manufacturing, food production, logistics/warehouse/distribution, metal/steel fabrication, mineral aggregates, and petroleum refining and distribution. The chart to the right identifies some of the major employers within the City of Huntington. As illustrated through Census data, manufacturing industries make up a large majority of employers.

**Industrial Parks**

Huntington has two formal industrial parks, both located along key transportation corridors, with road and rail access. The Riverfork Industrial Park was created in the 1970's and contains approximately 250 acres of land located along State Road 9 and serviced by Norfolk & Southern in the southwestern corner of the City. Park 24, the newest industrial park, was created in 2004. This 52 acre industrial park is officially located in the City of Huntington, but located adjacent to an area with approximately 750 acres of unincorporated industrial land. It is conveniently located along US 24, with adjacent Norfolk & Southern rail access and a private rail spur.

Employer	Category	Employees
Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems	Automotive Components	450
Bryan Machine Company	Precision Machining	20
Continental Structural Plastics	Automotive Components	375
Dean Foods	Milk/Dairy Products	120
Echo Lake Foods	Food Processing/Agriculture	110
Ecolab	Commercial Cleaning Products	110
General Aluminum	Aluminum Parts	95
Gerdau Steel	Metallurgical Processors	75
Helena Chemical	Agri-Chemicals	20
Homier Distribution	Hardware Distribution	20
Huntington Aluminum	Aluminum Smelting	58
Huntington Sheet Metal	Metal Fabrication	85
Huntington Powder Coat	Metal Finishing	25
Incipio Devices	Orthopedic Devices	60
Lime City Manufacturing	Metal Fabrication/Stamping	20
M & S Industrial Metal Fabrication	Metal Fabrication	75
MetroNet	Fiber Optic Communications	15
Midwest Industrial Metal Fabricators	Metal Fabrication	70
NIPAC	Corrugated & Misc. Packaging Products	190
Onward Manufacturing	Gas BBQ Grills	400
Our Sunday Visitor	Religious Printing/Publications	350
Pathfinder Services, Inc.	Nonprofit Human Services	300
Perfection Wheel	Aluminum Wheels (Automotive)	42
Pulley-Kellam, Inc.	Electronic Enclosures	75
Shuttleworth, Inc.	Custom Conveyor Systems	90
Schneider Electric/Square D	Electric Transformers	165
Sportsmobile, Inc.	Class B Motor Homes	20
Transwheel Corporation	Aluminum Wheels	250
UTEC	HVAC & Other Electronic Controls	130

*Source: Huntington County Economic Development Corporation (HCED)*

The City, through HCED, just recently completed the purchase of an initial 127 acres just west of the existing Riverfork Industrial Park. The land will become the next generation industrial park for Huntington as additional land is added, utilities are extended and the land is laid out and offered to new and existing industries. While still early in development, this is a major win for Huntington.

Other industrial areas are scattered throughout the City, in locations that are home to longtime industries that formed prior to industrial land uses being grouped together in formalized industrial parks. All of the industrial sites in Huntington have access to all utilities, including water, sewer, and telecommunications.

**Organizations**

The City of Huntington has a number of economic development organizations and stakeholders that promote business, industrial, and professional development. Each player has a unique role in the economic development activities of Huntington, allowing them to prevent the duplication of services, while they work cooperatively towards a common goal. Through positive working relationships, a number of successful projects have been completed to date.

**Huntington County Economic Development**

The primary economic development arm of Huntington is the Huntington County Economic Development Corporation (HCED). HCED is primarily focused on industrial and major commercial development and redevelopment activities. It offers opportunities for financial incentives for business development, marketing assistance for site and building development activities, and assists with zoning, planning, and other regulatory and taxing entities throughout Huntington County. It actively works to overcome obstacles that may inhibit business retention, growth, and development. HCED actively encourages the retention and expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new investment, and investment in the local workforce through training assistance. HCED works with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), the state agency charged with encouraging economic development, as it evaluates state incentives for development.



HCED was created in 1997 as a countywide economic development organization, designed to better collaborate and coordinate a variety of economic development activities throughout Huntington County. The organization functions as a “one-stop shop” for all industrial and economic development needs in Huntington County. The mission of the organization is to “maintain a unified economic development effort to promote opportunities for job retention, expansion and to attract new businesses to Huntington County”. Today the organization is a nationally recognized leader in economic development efforts.

Operating under the umbrella of HCED, the Lime City Economic Development Committee focuses on economic development opportunities within the City of Huntington. The committee grew out of early efforts of the Huntington County Chamber of Commerce, becoming its own economic development corporation for a time. When the focus was shifted to a countywide economic development effort, the committee merged with HCED. Once established, HCED agreed to continue the committee and maintain independent financial resources under HCED’s 501(c)(3) designation.

**Huntington County Chamber of Commerce**

The Huntington County Chamber of Commerce is involved in small scale economic development, business retention, community and legislative forums, continuing education, seminars, and quality of life in Huntington County. Comprised of nearly 350 members, the chamber is continually growing. Evolving from the Board of Trade that was created in 1902, the chamber was formed in 1924. It once was the primary economic development arm of Huntington County, overseeing industrial development in addition to commercial and professional activities. Today the chamber facilitates training programs, acts as a local legislative liaison, hosts the annual Heritage Days festival, and fosters an environment for businesses to locate and grow within Huntington County.



### Huntington County Visitors and Convention Bureau

As the main promoter of local historical and cultural resources, the Huntington County Visitors & Convention Bureau (HCVCB) is charged with promoting the attractions and amenities of Huntington County. Tourism plays an integral part in economic development, as it brings in outside dollars to the local community. It allows businesses to survive without relying solely on local customers. The primary responsibilities of the HCVCB include image development and positioning, serving as a visitor resource, and engaging in community promotion.



### Main Street Huntington

Main Street Huntington (MSH) is dedicated to the revitalization and promotion of Downtown Huntington. This is done through design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring of the downtown. It strives to restore downtown to its original place of prominence. As the traditional heart and hub of government, commerce, justice, and social interaction, the downtown business district portrays the City's overall image. This positive image helps to spur further investment and economic development across the community by proving that a city is only as strong as its downtown.

**MAIN STREET  
HUNTINGTON**



### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Continue to work towards implementing appropriate elements of strategic and master plans compiled by the economic development partners of the City of Huntington.
2. Identify clustering opportunities that provide for the targeting of industries and businesses that are suppliers or customers of existing local establishments. Also, identify new expansion opportunities for businesses that have needs similar to successful local businesses that are likely to benefit from Huntington's business environment.
3. Improve the quality and variety of retail, commercial, and service businesses through land use strategies and zoning reform policies throughout the City. Further develop mixed use land use categories and zoning to promote a mixture of business types within certain geographical areas where appropriate. Examine the creation of additional zoning classifications to fill existing land use voids within the zoning code that allow for expanded economic opportunities where appropriate.
4. Build upon recent successes and foster further consensus and regular communication between businesses, government, and other economic development partners in a manner which allows for continued economic success.
5. Continue to support and expand upon existing training opportunities, higher education, and co-op programs in order to sustain economic success and prosperity by investing in the local labor force.
6. Strengthen Huntington's overall tourism development through the pursuit of additional tourism programs that focus on the growing downtown and area cultural attractions and events.

## D. Industrial Development

### • Issues and Findings

Huntington has a long and rich history of being home to a number of manufacturing based firms. These firms have served as the City's industrial base and major employers for decades, thus helping Huntington grow. Huntington's manufacturing industries primarily import intermediate (semi-processed) goods that are then utilized to produce final manufactured products. Key factors that lead industries to locate in Huntington include: quality affordable sites; affordable, quality, available labor force; support and collaboration between local government; proximity to transportation networks (road and rail); low cost of living; competitive incentives; available infrastructure; and a superior business climate. Currently, the 250 acre Riverfork Industrial Park and the 52 acre Park 24 are at full capacity, with all sites being either built upon or privately held, although some vacant industrial buildings do exist, they too are privately held. This poses a unique problem, as recent major economic development success has left the City of Huntington in a position where it has no available undeveloped or shovel ready industrial land.



*Riverfork Industrial Park at SR 9 & CR 200 N*

Huntington's industrial base is a traditional mix that is weighted heavily with manufacturing. Of that manufacturing, a majority is comprised of automotive component manufacturing. Huntington is also home to companies that specialize in transportation and logistics, metal stamping and processing, food processing, energy, and electronic components. Huntington is home to companies that are subsidiaries of major national and international corporations, including ties to Germany, Brazil, Canada, Japan, and France. Huntington's dependence on a large manufacturing sector causes its economic base to be susceptible to economic or sector downturn and dynamic issues such as tariffs. On a national scale, manufacturing has been declining as an industry for over three decades. Huntington must remain competitive in order to attract exceptional manufacturing companies and niches that are experiencing growth. The City's industrial base is in need of expansion and diversification in order to remain competitive and attract technologically driven industries. It is also important for the City to retain a strong industrial base as a source of tax revenue to support future growth. A diverse economic base can help ensure that severe economic downturns in any one industry or sector will not have a detrimental impact on the City's tax base. Local industrial development continues to occur, with several large projects currently underway or slated to be completed in the near future. Since 2013, HCED has assisted 73 projects with capital investments totaling over \$184 million, 1,147 new jobs, and 7,447 jobs retained across Huntington County.



*Park 24 Industrial Park on US 24 just east of Huntington*



The acquisition of land for a new industrial park in Huntington represents an incredible opportunity for the community. Huntington has long envisioned this location for its next industrial space given its proximity to the Riverfork Industrial park, the adjacent highway, and rail access. With current industrial buildings being around 97% occupied it is critical that Huntington have an ample supply of available land to support expansion by existing companies and development by new companies. Annexation, utility, and roadway improvements must all be completed before land can be laid out and offered for development. Lessons learned from the development of the City's two other industrial parks must be implemented in order for this land to have the most positive impact on the community. Chief among them is that land should only be sold off or used as an incentive to companies serious about developing factories and creating jobs. The Community must be careful to ensure that land speculators do not acquire sites and unproductively tie up vacant properties for long periods of time.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Immediately begin development of the new industrial park so that economic development partners have ample available resources to market land, new job opportunities can be developed, and the tax base can further be sustained.
2. Continue to maintain low vacancy rates at existing industrial parks while supporting existing industries in their success and expansions when such opportunities present themselves.
3. Continue to market available industrial opportunities at a variety of levels which yield substantial economic success.
4. Formally develop long term development plans for the Huntington Municipal Airport and its surrounding land, exploring economic development opportunities that are suitable for the unique environment available.
5. Maintain and expand existing infrastructure so that industrial land remains viable to support business.
6. Ensure that labor supply issues are continually addressed and marketed through education institutions. Continue to work closely with area universities, colleges, vocational/technical training programs, and local manufacturers to ensure an adequate labor supply exists.
7. Focus marketing, attraction, and retention efforts on key sectors that have established strong concentrations in the City's economic base. While operating with a focus, the City is uniquely responsive to those that provide significant employment, reasonable income tax return, or offer opportunities for growth. As efforts are made to focus on economic clusters, they should be done in order to maximize available land so that the City can capture as much development as feasible on industrially zoned land.
8. Revisit industrial zoning classifications and standards in order to prevent policies from inhibiting economic development. Reform should be implemented in a manner in which it does not compromise surrounding land uses or conflict with the Comprehensive plan.

## E. Office Development

### • Issues and Findings

The City of Huntington contains the county's largest share of offices. In a community of Huntington's size, the offices are typically local or regional in nature and part of a larger industrial component. Downtown contains primarily financial, government, professional, attorney, doctors, and organizational offices. Some miscellaneous offices can be found scattered across the City, such as real estate and long-time professional offices. More developed office space can be found along major roadways, such as US 24. Downtown has a large concentration of office space that is currently used by or available for private offices. However, most of the offices are not located in traditional office buildings, but within historic downtown structures. The current Zoning Code permits office use in the downtown zoning classification, but these uses are inhibited by building and fire regulations that often require substantial structural modifications to maintain life-safety. In many cases, the necessary improvements far outweigh the value of the structure itself and are not economically feasible to complete. This leaves these underutilized spaces unfilled and unproductive in terms of the local economy.



*An advertisement for available office space in Huntington*

Huntington's size does not create a high demand for office space. Because Huntington is often considered a bedroom community to regional heavyweights such as Fort Wayne, it cannot easily compete with retail and other amenities of these areas which help to attract office tenants. Beyond the demand, Huntington lacks dedicated and defined office parks to support large scale corporate office development. In terms of zoning, Huntington has a Professional Office District zoning classification that supports small to medium sized office developments, but would inhibit the development of large scale office buildings and complexes if in demand. It is assumed that Huntington will continue to have sufficient land zoned for offices that would encourage corporate office development and housing options to further support this assumption. In addition, public-private partnerships may be required to enhance the marketability of downtown office space, including necessary parking and interior structural modifications.

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Develop a downtown office niche marketing strategy. This will allow for ancillary uses to take advantage of underutilized second story space in the downtown and provide additional job opportunities in the city core.
2. Consider incentive packages such as tax abatements or grants that promote the development of downtown office uses. Most reluctance to locate in the downtown will be because of parking and the high cost of building rehabilitation to meet the needs of the business and satisfy code requirements. Creative approaches to solving these problems need to be identified before the downtown can become a viable office area.
3. Promote mixed use development on the periphery and along major corridors. This must be done in an orderly and appropriate fashion to prevent sprawl and preserve character. Such developments should be planned, well landscaped, and of appropriate scale.

## F. Retail Development

### • Issues and Findings

The City contains the highest concentration of retail businesses in Huntington County. Retail shopping centers and standalone establishments make up a majority of the retail opportunities available. Much of this inventory is located along primary roadway corridors. A majority of Huntington residents are assumed to do most of their shopping at big box stores, although online shopping continues to increase. Specialized mass merchandise retail can be found in local shopping centers strategically located across Huntington. Currently, a large number of shopping centers exist in the northern part of Huntington, while a few shopping centers exist on the southern side. Residents utilize the downtown primarily for niche retail and specialty shops. Retail offerings cater to major demographic segments of the community, with a noted gap in servicing high-end consumers. Of the current establishments, a healthy mixture of longtime businesses and relatively new establishments exist. The retail industry in Huntington is also a significant employer, creating additional economic benefits in addition to pure sales and commerce activities. Over time, retail centers have relocated along with changes in residential development locations.



*Retail shopping amenities*

The diverse retail environment of Huntington allows residents a nearly complete array of shopping amenities. Like similar communities, Huntington's retail environment has developed an automobile dependence. This has led to increased competition and the overall changing retail industry has contributed to the decentralization of retail, leading it to become sprawled along major roadways. The proximity of Fort Wayne and other regional shopping markets allow for easy access to additional retail opportunities. This proximity can also be a hindrance, as residents may prefer to make a day trip and access merchants that are not as readily available locally. This causes a strain on local establishments that do not have the competitive advantages that can be accessed with larger consumer markets. Additionally, it causes local prices to be slightly higher, and with an increase in the number of residents who do not shop locally, the pricing disparity gap will only widen further.

The success of Huntington's overall retail environment has created a more difficult retail environment for downtown. Downtown's locally owned small businesses are an important part of the overall image of Huntington that has proven to be attractive to residents and visitors alike. However, these small businesses lack financial and marketing resources, which make them more susceptible to competition. Downtown has historically had high turnover rates as it relates to smaller start-up businesses. This is a sign of underlying weakness due to competitive forces acting on the City's small business base and trade area population. Downtown would benefit from anchor or junior anchor establishments. Many of the small retail businesses downtown have loyal customer bases that generate impressive consumer trip numbers. This leads to an increase in spin-off discretionary spending by consumers at other downtown businesses. In order to attract customers back downtown, Huntington must increase downtown offerings of entertainment, recreation, retail, grocery, and restaurants. Huntington residents are adamant that the true strength of downtown is its base of independent, home grown businesses. It is likely that the addition of other chain stores north of the bypass would impair the ability of downtown to regain its competitiveness in the sense of general retail, but it continues to have an advantage as it relates to niche retail.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. An important issue for the area north of the bypass is the large-scale, rapidly developing, strip and big box retail centers. These areas, combined with spin-off retail, are a major draw for Huntington residents. As such, Downtown must solidify its role as a niche market location in order to remain competitive and prevent a leakage in retail expenditures to areas outside of downtown.
2. Huntington's locally owned small businesses are an important part of its overall image that is attractive to residents and visitors alike. However, these businesses are quickly disappearing due to their inability to compete with larger retail. Efforts must be undertaken to reinforce and preserve existing retail offerings.
3. Downtown is quickly emerging as the entertainment venue for nearby residents. This growth will lead to increased consumer activity at nearby businesses and help to improve the overall vibrancy of downtown. This must be capitalized on in order to diversify offerings and assist the downtown in regaining a competitive edge.
4. For a small community rich in history, a key marketing strategy is to build upon the inflow of tourists and day-trippers from outside of the existing trade area. Key elements include the development of unique tourist amenities that cater to guests and help to bolster the community's image as a getaway location. Restaurants, conference facilities, heritage corridors, and tourist attractions are also important marketing elements that should be considered as part of a tourism marketing strategy.
5. Huntington must advance its efforts to attract new retail offerings to the community in order to capture local dollars and contribute to the local economy. Retail offerings should be diverse and service various socioeconomic markets in order to appeal to the entire community.
6. Huntington has a long history in fostering local entrepreneurship; it must build upon its past success and expand its support network to allow startup businesses to gain insight in the areas of merchandising, strategies, succession planning, market research, building improvements, and financial incentives/assistance in order to be successful.
7. A number of land use strategies should be examined in order to benefit Huntington's retail environment. Such strategies include pedestrian amenities, mixed use developments, enhanced gateways into Huntington, improved development standards, and streetscape and corridor improvements. These strategies should be employed in a manner which discourages single-use, suburban, retail development along major corridors.
8. Current zoning classifications should be reviewed in order to determine that retail uses are permitted within appropriate zoning districts. More specifically, certain types of retail uses should be limited to higher intensity zoning classifications in a planned fashion.



## G. Tourism

### • Issues and Findings

Huntington has the potential for growth in tourism related activities. Huntington's area attractions include museums and historic sites, local fairs and festivals that celebrate heritage, and numerous recreational opportunities. Visitors to Huntington experience a history that has been built on generations of residents who had a pioneering spirit and appreciation for the community. Early settlers built along the former system of canals that once crisscrossed the downtown. Later, extensive railway networks bisected Huntington, leading to the development of warehousing and logistics businesses. Today a sophisticated roadway network signifies Huntington's location among the "Crossroads of America", giving it easy access to visitors.



*Huntington is home to the only US Vice Presidential museum*

The City has an outstanding collection of historic buildings and sites, as well as picturesque architecture that could be utilized in a tourism strategy. Huntington has worked hard to preserve its collection of 19th and 20th century architecture, including stately Victorian homes. The historic neighborhoods are flanked by ornate churches, the Romanesque revival City Building, and majestic Huntington County Courthouse. The Huntington County Visitors and Convention Bureau (HCVCB) has worked hard to develop the tourism market of the area. The agency maintains a storefront in downtown, which serves as a welcome center for visitors. Its recently redesigned website offers comprehensive tourism information that markets area attractions.

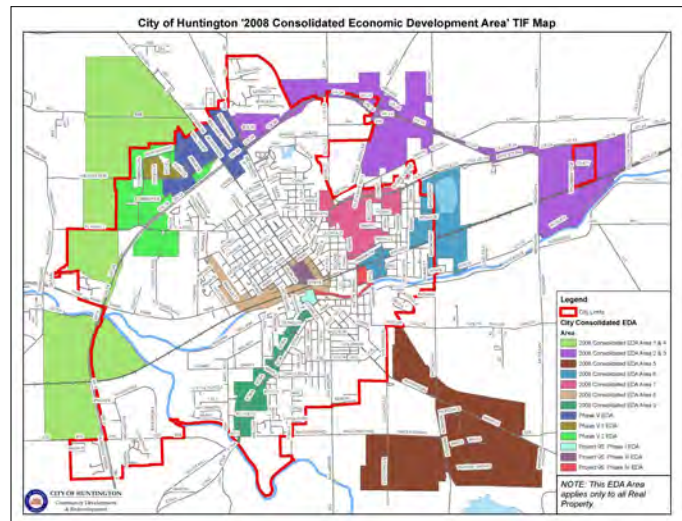
### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Huntington must continue to work with area attractions and events to strengthen its overall tourism industry. It is likely that the community would benefit from a comprehensive tourism strategy that includes an effective branding campaign and expanded travel offerings to increase regional, statewide, and out of town travelers.
2. Increasing the number of overnight stays is currently the only way for Huntington to financially sustain its tourism efforts while substantially impacting the local economy. Possible strategies include developing itineraries for multi-day experiences and working with employers to place contractors and visitors locally.
3. Currently, a number of lodging options exist for out of town guests. It is possible that a program to educate local hospitality workers on Huntington County attractions should be developed in order to encourage additional dollars to be spent locally and increase the level of satisfaction with guest's overall visit to the area.
4. The tourism arm of Huntington must continue to work with stakeholders such as HCED and the Chamber of Commerce to help attract quality destinations to the community. It must also continue its participation with downtown merchants in order to help grow the downtown as a local destination. Furthermore, it must determine ways in which to communicate with local government on key issues that affect tourism functions and continue to act as an advocacy for tourism as a form of economic development.

## H. Economic Incentives

### • Issues and Findings

Businesses and industries thrive and grow in Huntington when a strong partnership between the community and its employment base exist. These partnerships offer new and existing companies an important financial edge. Locally, businesses discover a number of financial opportunities, incentives, and assistance that are custom tailored to their unique business needs. The economic development process has become almost ruthlessly competitive throughout the Midwest. Some communities are currently acquiring industrial property and transferring ownership to employer prospects without any cost to the company. State and local incentive packages, which historically have been viewed as generous, are now significantly costlier to the taxpayers. The number one defense against losing economic development to the competition is to maintain a pro-business, pro-customer service approach when working with existing and prospective employers.



*Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Consolidated District Map*

The City of Huntington, in conjunction with Huntington County and Huntington County Economic Development (HCED) offers many economic incentive programs to retain and recruit businesses. The City's incentive programs and tools encourage and support economic development, entrepreneurship, and business expansion and retention. This chapter lists and describes many of the existing offerings available. As a community, Huntington supports the traditional goals and underlying incentives of funding mechanisms such as TIF and LIT.

#### Property Tax Abatements

Owners of real and personal property in designated Economic Revitalization Areas (ERA) who make improvements may be eligible for property tax abatements for up to 10 years. Abatements are reviewed by the City of Huntington Economic Development Commission and decided upon by the Common Council based upon the degree and number of new jobs created, jobs retained, and wages paid.

#### LIT/CEDIT Grants

The City of Huntington routinely utilizes Local Income Tax (LIT) or CEDIT Grants as a means of facilitating economic development. The limited grants are custom tailored to each project and developed out of recommendations by various entities and commissions. The grants are eligible to be used towards infrastructure and building improvements resulting in the creation of new jobs. Grants of this type are also available from Huntington County for properties within the City of Huntington.

#### Huntington County Community Learning Center

In certain cases state or federal employee training grants may be provided to employers as an incentive. These grants may be part of recruitment or retention efforts for certain occupation workforce skill development. Huntington is in a unique position to be able to offer training locally at the Huntington County Community Learning Center through its partner training providers.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

The City of Huntington utilizes Tax Increment Financing as an economic development tool to generate property tax revenues attributed to increases in assessed value (AV). The City of Huntington's unified TIF district is an economic development area that promotes development, job creation, and job retention through infrastructure and redevelopment projects administered by the City of Huntington Redevelopment Commission. Huntington's TIF district covers most of the commercial and industrial areas, or areas targeted for development both within the City and in Huntington County, thanks to governmental cooperation.

Increases in assessed value occur when private development takes place. When a TIF district is created, the AV is frozen, as development occurs, the property taxes paid on the increased AV are captured and can be utilized to pay for infrastructure improvements, debt payments on bonds issued to facilitate economic development, and a variety of other costs incurred to generate additional development within the TIF districts.

**Industrial Revenue Bonding**

Private activity bonds, also known as Industrial Revenue Bonds, are issued by state or local governments for the benefit of a private company. Typically the company is a large scale manufacturing entity. Interest on the bonds is generally exempt from federal income taxes for investors, which typically results in lower long-term interest rates to the borrower. These bonds are typically utilized for large scale projects which accompany significant capital investment. The process for this type of incentive is extremely selective and availability is very limited, based upon a number of criteria, including major job creation and major capital investment.

**Opportunity Zones**

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 allowed Huntington to create an Opportunity Zone for its eligible Census tract on the east part of the City. Opportunity Zones are designed to spur economic development by providing tax benefits to investors. Investors can defer tax on any prior gains invested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) until the earlier of the date on which the investment in a QOF is sold or exchanged, or December 31, 2026. If the QOF investment is held for longer than 5 years, there is a 10% exclusion of the deferred gain. If held for more than 7 years, the 10% becomes 15%. Also, if the investor holds the investment in the Opportunity Fund for at least ten years, the investor is eligible for an increase in basis of the QOF investment equal to its fair market value on the date that the QOF investment is sold or exchanged.

**Workforce Development Training Assistance**

New and existing businesses may qualify for a variety of skills and computer training, communication and leadership education, and other customized opportunities to assist in workforce development from a number of different agencies.

**State of Indiana Incentives**

The state of Indiana offers numerous incentives, including tax incentives, tax credits, and economic development programs to prospective businesses. These incentives are of varying scale and coordinated through the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, an entity that HCED works closely with in order to bring economic success to Huntington.



- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Continue to evaluate projects based upon set policies that ensure sufficient returns for the City, which is relative to employment levels and tax revenue that justify incentive packages. Incentives are limited and should be strategically utilized and targeted when appropriate. Each project is unique and should be evaluated based upon its own merits with consideration to return of investment and length of benefit.
2. Ensure that projects which are awarded incentives are consistent with the Comprehensive plan. This consistency is measured relative to land use, density, location, infrastructure, and character. Such consistency will ensure that the plan vision is supported.
3. Continue to package incentives, utilizing various types and sources of incentives, in a matter that is responsive to projects and fulfills the City's economic priorities.
4. Establish economic development priorities and provide incentives accordingly to projects that are consistent with the economic, land use, and infrastructure policies of the City of Huntington.
5. Continue to utilize TIF for projects that require significant infrastructure improvements in order to facilitate economic development and improve quality of life.
6. Continue to work with Huntington County, HCED, and the State of Indiana to structure and implement incentives. These economic partners most often work cooperatively to compile incentive packages and coordinate projects, although some projects may only qualify for select incentives from various agencies.





## VIII. EDUCATION

*“Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation.”*

*-President John F. Kennedy-*



## A. Introduction

One of the keys to the future of Huntington lies in maintaining quality schools and an educated citizen population. The primary role of the public school system continues to be the education of our children. The youth of today are the future of tomorrow and investing in them is necessary. Over the past few decades, education in general has expanded beyond its traditional scope to include a broad range of support activities. More than ever, working families demand early childcare, before and after school programs, services, and resources. The rapid growth of the information age, coupled with business and industry in the global economy, mandates continuous lifelong learning experiences and workforce development.



*Huntington's youth population is tomorrow's future*

Education efforts across Huntington have been expanded and reinvented in recent years, paying notion to changes in educational structures and systems, and most notably offering educational alternatives of a wide variety. Like other Midwestern cities that have been forced to cope with a decline in manufacturing and industrial jobs, Huntington faces an ever growing need to prepare its current and future workforce to meet the needs of a new economy. In doing so, Huntington County Community School Corporation (HCCSC), Huntington Catholic Schools (HCS), Huntington University, Ivy Tech, and Indiana Tech are actively engaged in partnerships with businesses, industries, public entities, and social service agencies that have expanded the role of traditional education in order to address the complete range of lifelong learning needs.

Some examples of these collaborative partnerships include:

- The Huntington County Community Learning Center is a product of regional vision and local collaboration. This facility offers training, courses, and certifications for adult workers who want to upskill or reskill. It also houses space for workforce and education related partners.
- Huntington County Community School Corporation offers vocational education courses and cooperative education programs that pair students with businesses and industries that offer unique real world experiences and on the job training.
- Ivy Tech offers a workforce development program with local employers for the benefit of its students.
- Huntington University offers its EXCEL program for working adults, an accelerated pace curriculum aimed at meeting the education needs of working adults.

While education itself is not a municipal function, the economic sustainability of the City is closely linked to the quality of its larger educational system. A policy that promotes and supports quality education for citizens at every stage of life is an investment in the economic future of the community as a whole. Although there are many educational institutions that operate within Huntington, this Comprehensive Plan will primarily focus on those who serve a majority of the community.

Future efforts towards ensuring the delivery of quality educational opportunities should include:

- Strengthening partnerships between the local government, Huntington County Community School Corporation, Huntington Catholic Schools, Huntington University, Ivy Tech, and Indiana Tech.
- Continued maintenance of high quality early childcare facilities and opportunities.
- Maximizing after school, adult education, and workforce development opportunities.

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

- **Goals**

1. The educational institutions of Huntington will continue to provide outstanding facilities and programs, which develop a continued strong community presence and relationship. Educational resources and facilities will enable students of all ages and abilities to succeed in education and career opportunities, to be effective life-long learners, and to participate actively in society as model citizens.

- **Objectives**

1. Encourage involvement in education, especially parental involvement, throughout the entire educational process.
2. Continue to offer early education options that focus on childhood development for all children regardless of socioeconomic status.
3. Continue collaboration, communication, and planning between institutions, industry, and government that allows for the sharing of resources.
4. Promote opportunities and foster an environment that encourages lifelong learning among all residents, filling identified educational gaps that emerge between transitional life stages.
5. Ensure collaboration between stakeholders in regards to safety protocols and emergency procedures.
6. Promote unity, inclusiveness, and diversity in educational options offered within the City of Huntington.
7. Broaden on the job training and specialized skill development, with a continued focus on immersive learning opportunities that provide invaluable real work experience.
8. Vigorously work to increase educational attainment levels among all segments of the population.
9. Promote the integration of immigrant populations through language acquisitions and cultural exchanges.

## C. Pre-Kindergarten through 12th Grade

### • Issues and Findings

#### Huntington County Community School Corporation

The City of Huntington is serviced by a single countywide school district, the same district that also serves the communities of Andrews, Markle, Mt. Etna, Roanoke, and Warren. The school system is currently comprised of six elementary buildings, two junior high buildings, and one high school. The school corporation is dedicated to creating world-class learning results by focusing on literacy, academic standards, a safe learning environment, stakeholder satisfaction, and career and life readiness.

Its progressive philosophy, technology focus, highly effective teaching model, and high-impact programs provide students with a strong base for further academic challenges. Currently, HCCSC serves approximately 5,100 students. As shown in the chart below, the student population in the system has continually experienced an average decline of about 1.7% annually in the past fourteen years, a characteristic that can be directly linked to countywide population loss, and smaller average family sizes. This trend is expected to continue at least in the near future, unless Huntington can reinvent itself in a manner that allows it to grow in terms of population.



Huntington County Community School Corporation Enrollment																	
Year	Pre K	KG	Gr 1	Gr 2	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11	Gr 12	Other	Total	% Change
2018-19	123	362	400	363	399	389	410	408	411	402	379	385	347	348	0	5,126	-2.7%
2017-18	97	412	358	397	378	402	400	413	409	387	402	369	476	369	0	5,269	0.1%
2016-17	95	375	416	381	407	399	412	410	388	407	386	378	391	420	0	5,265	-1.7%
2015-16	68	435	380	404	407	397	402	392	428	401	398	411	431	401	0	5,355	-2.0%
2014-15	113	394	418	415	403	407	399	432	409	397	414	445	386	435	0	5,467	-2.3%
2013-14	113	430	425	402	429	396	416	413	405	425	456	403	430	452	0	5,595	-0.8%
2012-13	53	449	418	428	402	430	419	402	420	469	414	444	456	436	0	5,640	-4.1%
2011-12	80	433	440	405	447	413	400	440	486	442	473	472	444	508	0	5,883	-2.2%
2010-11	51	450	421	448	421	417	449	487	464	484	483	459	484	496	0	6,014	1.1%
2009-10	65	402	443	420	417	441	470	458	472	468	458	492	482	426	35	5,949	-2.1%
2008-09	36	449	436	420	451	465	453	469	480	477	504	496	450	463	25	6,074	-0.8%
2007-08	46	418	456	466	464	461	455	478	470	495	502	456	483	454	17	6,121	-1.5%
2006-07	16	422	496	469	450	454	471	488	497	512	472	521	483	461	N/A	6,212	-2.6%
2005-06	35	483	484	461	468	461	493	498	530	466	530	501	491	477	N/A	6,378	N/A

Source: Indiana Department of Education



### Educational Attainment

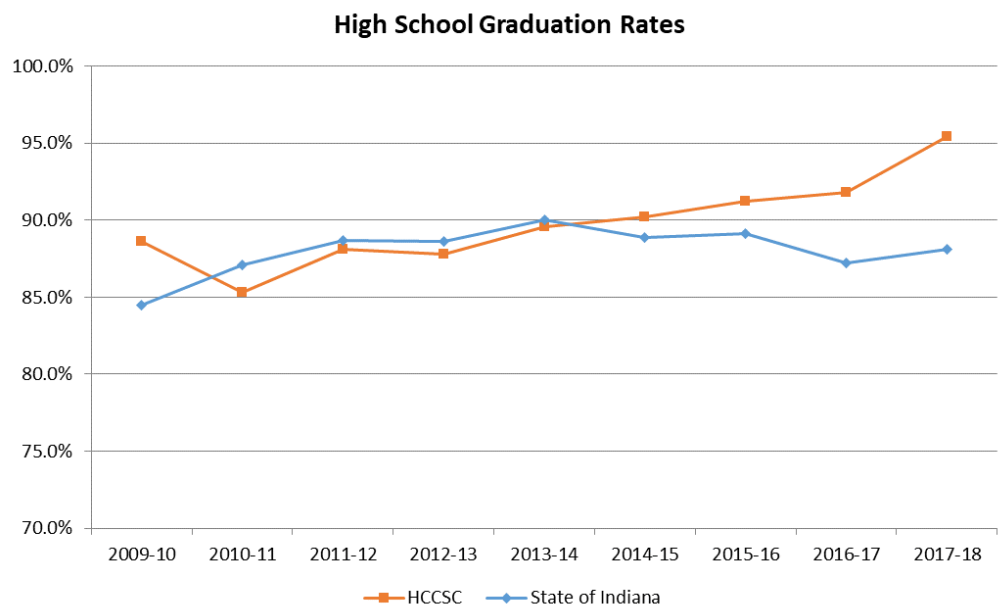
According to the 2017 Census and as shown in the table to the right, the overall educational attainment of Huntington continues to rise in most areas. In 2017, 45.1% of persons living in Huntington that are age 25 or older, have received a high school diploma or equivalent, while only 8.5% have received a Bachelor's degree. The percentage of the population with advanced degrees has nearly doubled from 2010 to 2017. Nearly 19% of adults over 25 years old have attended some college, but not received a degree. This data illustrates that the City has been able to successfully recruit or retain a population with higher educational levels since the original 2012 plan. The increase in wages in that same timeframe can be seen as directly correlating with this trend.

Education Attainment	2000	2010	2017
Population 25 years and over	12,171	11,022	10,869
Less than 9th grade	4.3%	4.6%	3.5%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	14.6%	11.0%	10.0%
High school graduate (inc. equivalency)	46.5%	43.7%	45.1%
Some college, no degree	15.1%	21.9%	18.6%
Associate degree	5.7%	7.2%	7.4%
Bachelor's degree	8.1%	7.8%	8.5%
Master's degree	3.9%	3.8%	6.9%
Professional degree	1.1%		
Doctorate degree	0.6%		
Percent high school graduate or higher	81.0%	84.3%	86.5%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	13.7%	11.6%	15.5%

Source: US Census 2000 Census & 2010 American Community Survey

### Graduation Rates

As shown in the graph to the right, High School graduation rates for Huntington County Community School Corporation have consistently been near or well above the State of Indiana average. In recent years, the graduation rate of HCCSC has been significantly higher than that of the State of Indiana. Prior to that time, the local graduation rate was just below the state average. It is expected that this higher than average graduation trend will continue.



Source: Indiana Department of Education

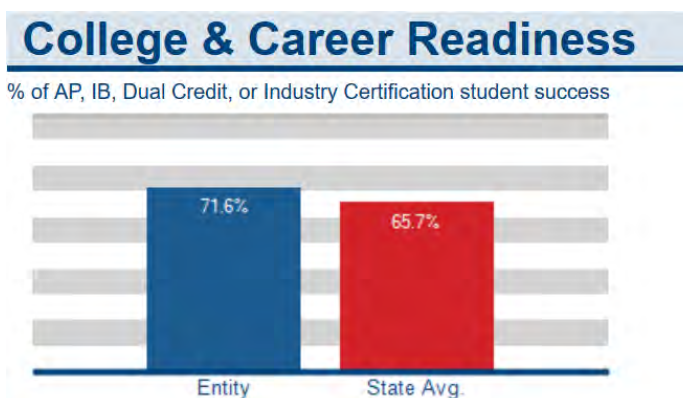
**Educational Statistics**

The table to the right summarizes and compares educational statistics for Huntington County Community School Corporation to those of the State of Indiana for the 2016-17 school year. Huntington nearly doubles the state in the percent of career and technical diplomas, 9.8% to 5.2%. Huntington teacher salaries are roughly in the middle of the pack when compared to that of the state as a whole. Huntington has a slightly percentage of students in special education programs and a slightly lower percentage of students in gifted and talented programs. Huntington experiences a fewer percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunches than the state average. A significantly fewer percent of local students have limited English proficiency than that of the state. Local and state figures for students in alternative education are similar. Huntington does lag behind the state in terms of the percent of students enrolled in career and technical programs, although its recent increased focus through Viking New Tech and the Learning Center should help to increase this rate in the future. The graduation rate of Huntington schools continues to exceed that of the state average.

2016-17 School Performance Indicator	HCCSC	Indiana
A-F Accountability Grade	B	N/A
Student Enrollment	5,265	1,133,380
College & Career Readiness Rate	60.6%	63.6%
Percent of Career and Technical Diplomas	9.8%	5.2%
Certified Teachers	334	59,669
Teacher Salary Range - Minimum	\$ 34,000	\$ 24,000
Teacher Salary Range - Maximum	\$ 69,557	\$ 90,000
Number of Students in Special Education	916	162,714
Percent of Students in Special Education	17.4%	15.0%
Number of Students in Gifted and Talented Education	528	149,810
Percent of Students in Gifted and Talented Education	10.0%	14.3%
Number of Students Receiving Free or Reduced Lunches	2,290	526,191
Percent of Students Receiving Free or Reduced Lunches	43.5%	48.2%
Number of Limited English Proficiency Students	25	53,614
Percent of Limited English Proficiency Students	0.5%	4.8%
Number of Students in Alternative Education	79	17,692
Percent of Students in Alternative Education	1.5%	1.7%
Number of Students in Career and Technical Program	1,079	349,275
Percent of Students in Career and Technical Program	20.5%	37.7%
Intra District Mobility	1.9	N/A
Inter District Mobility	5.3	N/A
Graduation Rate (on-time)	91.8%	88.8%

Source: Indiana Department of Education 2016-17

Overall, in terms of college and career readiness, Huntington exceeded that of the state average at 71.6% vs. 65.7% as shown in the chart to the right for the 2017-18 school year. College and career readiness is defined as students having the knowledge, skills, and abilities to succeed in post-secondary education and economically viable career opportunities. This measurement is based on student achievement on state tests, growth on state test results, graduation rates, participation and performance on advanced course work, and credential and certificates in career and technical courses.



Source: Indiana Department of Education 2017-18

**ISTEP+ Test Scores**

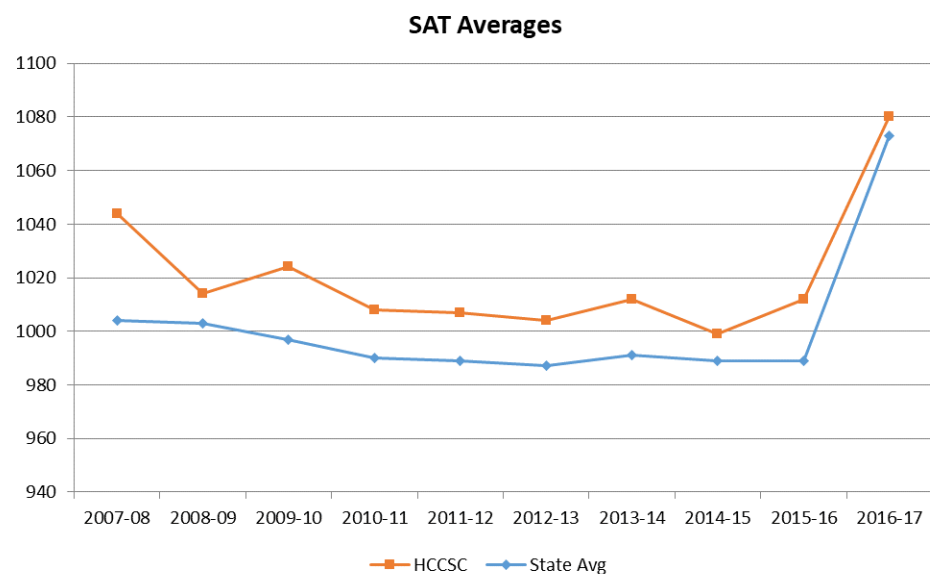
The chart to the right lists the ISTEP+ math and English (language arts) test scores given only to students in grades 3 through 8. The chart lists scores from the 2014-15 to 2017-2018 school years for HCCSC and the State of Indiana. The average ISTEP+ math scores for HCCSC were above those for the entire state prior to the 2017-2018 school year. In terms of the verbal or language arts test, local scores have consistently exceeded state averages since the advent of the ISTEP+ test. When both test portions are taken into account, the local combined scores have typically been above the state average, with the exception of the 2017-2018 school year. In the 2014-15 school year, Indiana transitioned to more rigorous testing standards, therefore prior years are not provided for comparison.

ISTEP	HCCSC			Indiana		
Year	Math	English	Both	Math	English	Both
2017-18	55.2%	66.4%	49.3%	58.3%	64.1%	50.7%
2016-17	60.0%	70.7%	54.4%	58.5%	65.2%	51.4%
2015-16	61.3%	72.1%	54.8%	58.9%	66.1%	51.6%
2014-15	62.3%	71.6%	56.5%	61.0%	67.3%	53.5%

Source: Indiana Department of Education

**SAT Scores**

Statistics collected by the Indiana Department of Education track average SAT scores by state and school corporation. As illustrated in the chart to the right, average SAT scores for HCCSC have remained above the State of Indiana average in recent years. Historically speaking, the US average SAT score has exceeded that of both Huntington and the State. This could in part be associated with the drive in recent years to push high school graduates towards college or other post-secondary education or training opportunities.



Source: Indiana Department of Education

**Socio-Economic Factors**

Several socio-economic factors have a significant impact on a student's educational performance and consequently affect the student's participation in higher education opportunities. Primary socio-economic factors include: single parent families, lower than average household income, teen pregnancy rates, and the degree of educational attainment by parents. Socio-economic backgrounds are the major factors in the variation in student perspectives on the value and attainability of higher education. The quality and sustainability of Huntington's future workforce is heavily dependent on creating and retaining an educated, well-skilled, and technologically savvy population. These factors provide the City of Huntington, Huntington County Community School Corporation, local universities & colleges, and area businesses with a justification to develop intervention strategies to address these socio-economic factors that impact student performance.

### Public Schools

Home of the Vikings, Huntington North High School (HNHS) is the only high school for grades 9-12 in all of Huntington County. The school had 1,459 students enrolled for the 2018-2019 school year. HNHS, both middle schools and Horace Mann Elementary are the only public school located within the City of Huntington. Huntington North also features Viking New Tech, a small learning community or school within a school. Viking New Tech is based upon a revolutionary, cutting-edge model that emphasizes project based learning, an immersion in technology, and an unprecedented level of empowerment. Students work in groups with their teacher's direction and learn to solve problems which emulate the real world.



Elementary Schools within HCCSC include:

- Andrews Elementary School
- Flint Springs Elementary
- Horace Mann Elementary School
- Lincoln Elementary School
- Roanoke Elementary School
- Salamonie School

Middle Schools within HCCSC include:

- Crestview Middle School
- Riverview Middle School

The public school facilities of Huntington County are of varying age, with Andrews, Flint Springs, Lincoln and Crestview being the newest. Huntington North High School, originally constructed in 1969, has seen a number of renovations over its history aimed at keeping it up to date. Currently a major education and athletic upgrade/expansion is in the works and planned for 2020.



*HCCSC's Crestview Middle School*

### Private/Parochial Schools

Huntington Catholic School services pre-kindergarten through 8th grade between its two buildings on Cherry and Jefferson Streets. In the 2018-2019 school year, approximately 142 students were enrolled at the school. The present school was formed during the 1985-1987 school years when SS Peter & Paul and St. Mary Catholic Churches consolidated their independent schools into one school with two buildings.

### Early Childhood Education

Huntington currently offers a number of early childhood education and development facilities, as well as Head Start and Early Head Start. These facilities range from for profit programs to services offered by religious entities that are devoted to childcare, pre-schooling, and child development services.



*Huntington Catholic School Middle Building*

**Summary**

The lifelong learning needs of Huntington's residents will be met through cooperation and commitment in educational excellence for all citizens. The City will continue to support and cooperate with the educational institutions of Huntington, so that its residents may benefit from the highest quality and variety of educational opportunities.

**• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Pursue grants and other funding mechanisms, such as Safe Routes to School that provide for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements to improve school safety and promote alternative transportation options.
2. Strengthen the role of parents as "first teachers" to allow for early development and learning, as well as increase parental involvement and encouragement in their child's education.
3. Work to improve access to advanced technology in educational facilities to promote cutting edge learning opportunities that are relevant and competitive on the global scale.
4. Local government will continue to recognize education as an important element. The government will interface with educational partners and improve opportunities for internships and job shadowing experiences within local government.
5. Promote and encourage student involvement within the community, allowing students to give back, become engaged, and grow personal community pride in the youth population.



## D. University Community

### • Issues and Findings

Every citizen of Huntington deserves reasonable and affordable access to higher education opportunities that correlate to their individual needs and abilities; unrestricted by age, gender, race, ability, or economic status. Higher education has an important role in providing support to economic development by contributing a competent and competitive workforce, while ensuring lifelong learning and training opportunities for the citizens of Huntington. A strong cooperative relationship between higher education and K-12 education is required to ensure that students entering the university community are prepared to succeed.

#### Adult Opportunities

Both the quality and variety of higher education within Huntington is more than competitive with cities of similar size across America. Citizens of Huntington continue to benefit from its ever growing, comprehensive network of diverse and high quality post-secondary educational institutions. Local institutions maintain distinct, but complementary roles and missions in educating the residents of Huntington. All of the following institutions offer continuing education opportunities for working adults in Huntington: Huntington University, Ivy Tech, Indiana Tech, and Huntington County Community School Corporation-Adult Education. These institutions are collaborating more frequently to offer expanded learning opportunities for students and partnering with the business community to meet workforce challenges.

#### Huntington University

Huntington University is a nationally recognized, independent, four-year, Christ-centered, liberal arts university. U.S. News & World Report consistently ranks Huntington among the best colleges and best values in the Midwest. Additionally, Forbes.com has listed the university as one of America's Best Colleges, and Princeton Review routinely includes HU on its "Best in the Midwest" list. Founded in 1897 as Central College by the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Huntington University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Huntington University's 170-acre main campus is located in the northeastern corner of Huntington. Huntington University also operates a second campus in Peoria, Arizona and additional satellite locations in surrounding communities and offers courses online. The University enrolls just over 1,300 students and offers more than 70 programs of study at the undergraduate and graduate level.



Huntington University enriches quality of life in the local community through:

- Nationally ranked intercollegiate athletics
- Merillat Centre for the Arts (concerts, art exhibits, and theatre performances)
- Partnerships with local public schools (graduate coursework and field trips at Thornhill Nature Preserve)
- Lifespring Counseling Center
- RichLyn Library Collection
- Friesen Center for Volunteer Service
- Enterprise Resource Center (internship clearinghouse)
- Conference and catering services

**Ivy Tech Community College**

Ivy Tech has two different training sites to serve Huntington, with its nearest main campus being in Fort Wayne. The technical based institution offers various certificates and associate's degrees. The facility holds classes at the Huntington County Community Learning Center.

Ivy Tech has worked constantly to provide training services for employers and to coordinate with economic development efforts to supplement the workforce. This is in line with the college's desire to strengthen workforce development and to fulfill its mission.

**Indiana Institute of Technology**

Indiana Tech, as it is commonly known, was founded in 1930 and is organized into five schools of study with a current undergraduate enrollment of 1,710 students and total enrollment of 10,282 students. Its main campus is conveniently located in Fort Wayne, but it also maintains 17 satellite locations. The college has offered classes on Commercial Road in Huntington since 2001. It is a four-year private residential university that provides associate, bachelor, masters and doctoral degree programs in business, criminal science, engineering, and computer studies. Overall the school remains career oriented in its course offerings and degree programs, well suited for both new professionals and working adults alike.



*Indiana Tech - Huntington Campus*

**• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Incorporate long range planning efforts between the university community and the City of Huntington to ensure that all parties achieve mutual benefit as it relates to land use, facilities, and infrastructure.
2. Continue to provide adult education opportunities that allow the current workforce to remain competitive, advance their careers, and provide for non-traditional higher education opportunities.
3. Support efforts that allow students to become involved in the local community, establishing personal connections that encourage the retention of these students as citizens after they graduate.
4. Continue to work cooperatively in the continuous investment and expansion in the Huntington County Community Learning Center's offerings.

## E. Public Library

### • Issues and Findings

Huntington is serviced by the Huntington City-Township Public Library. The state of the art facility recently underwent an expansion to increase its programming space. Beyond offering traditional book circulation services, the library is known for its children's services, which includes summer reading programs, story times, accelerated reader books, holiday programming, and school art exhibits. The library provides computer and internet access to its patrons for reference use in addition to digital library catalogs and databases. Community rooms are available for public use to host meetings and special events.

The library has a focus on education programs for patrons of all ages. The programs are devoted to encouraging early reading skill development in children and improving literacy among all age segments. Adult programming includes assistance in obtaining a GED, hosting writers groups, tax preparation resources, and unemployment assistance.



*Huntington City-Township Public Library*

One of the most popular local resources within the library can be found at the Indiana Room. This non-circulating reference and resource collection hosts historic materials relating to the history of Huntington County. The collections include: microfilm records of county newspapers, files on local businesses and industries, school yearbooks, and Huntington City and County Directories from 1892 to present. The room is the main resource for genealogy information for Huntington County, featuring birth and death records, family histories, marriages, and archived Census information.

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Expand programs aimed at improving the literacy rate among the residents of Huntington which will allow them to lead more productive lives.
2. Continue to focus on children's services in a manner that perpetuates the high standard of diverse programming currently being offered to the community.

## F. Career Opportunities

### • Issues and Findings

Huntington's economic and social health is dependent upon the strength and vitality of its workforce. The quality of Huntington's workforce is critical to economic development efforts and the sustainability of existing economic conditions. It is one of the most crucial factors in attracting and retaining businesses and investment. This Comprehensive Plan reflects a deep commitment by the City to the economic vitality of Huntington and efforts in workforce development that meet the evolving demands of the local economy. Huntington's quality of life requires the involvement of citizens who are educated, creative, and capable of creative problem solving.



*An opportunity for employment*

The City of Huntington and Huntington County offer businesses their most valuable asset, a trained, motivated, and reliable workforce at a competitive wage. Educational leaders must work cooperatively with businesses in order to identify emerging needs. Policy makers need to be concerned with four major categories of workforce and career development resources as they integrate into the community:

1. Developing a competitive workforce
2. Existing/planned technology infrastructure
3. Student/workforce readiness and training
4. Educational institutions and partnerships with business and community leaders

### The Department of Workforce Development

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) provides employers with a free labor exchange service designed to help build Indiana's workforce by bringing together qualified job seekers and employers seeking qualified workers. The DWD serves both the worker and the employers to ensure workplace success. The Department facilitates or provides:

- WorkOne Centers - Provide a local resource for posting jobs, recruiting candidates, securing training, finding jobs, and other workforce needs.
- Unemployment Insurance - Benefits for those who have been laid off or lost their job through no fault of their own.
- Labor Market Information - Statistics are provided by the DWD, including extensive data on the available labor force, occupational projections, demographics, industry trends, salary information, and unemployment statistics.
- Regional Workforce Strategies - The DWD encourages regional planning and local implementation of workforce service strategies.
- Professional Training - Provide assistance to find training opportunities for high-skill, in demand industries.



WorkOne Centers are strategically located across the state to provide tools that help students, job seekers, and workers adjust to the rapidly changing job market. Ivy Tech College offers a division of Workforce and Economic Development (WED) that provides customized training, professional development, and evaluation services for Huntington's workforce. WED is the continuing education and training arm of Ivy Tech. WED assists workers in upgrading and enhancing their skills and helps employers to create a more competitive workforce. The WED program offers students flexible and customized training programs, on-site work training and courses, and full-degree programs. It offers employers training for their existing workforce including skills training, leadership classes, and organizational instruction. The centers are regional career information sources that provide the latest job and labor market information.

### **Northeast Indiana Works**

Northeast Indiana Works, the region's non-profit workforce development organization, provides public and private financial and employment resources for education and skills training to meet the needs of regional industries. Each year the entity serves more than 20,000 individuals and more than 1,500 employers in the 11 county region of northeast Indiana. The 20 member board includes appointed representatives from the counties within the region. Members have backgrounds in economic development, education, labor, and faith and community based organizations. The Workforce Investment Board was formed under the State of Indiana Workforce Plan, as part of a larger workforce investment system. The board is charged with developing and implementing an efficient, effective, and integrated workforce development system within northeast Indiana. It provides employment, education, and training programs and services to ensure that employees have the skills and opportunities necessary to earn a living wage.



### **• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Review existing partnerships and create new partnerships with workforce preparation programs to foster literacy skills in career and technical education.
2. Further collaboration and communication between educational institutions and industries in order to ensure that students are given options to obtain a world-class education and provided with a training environment that supports Huntington's growing manufacturing community.
3. Focus on advanced technology and skill learning, careers and business development. Investigate opportunities for university, community, state, federal, and industrial partnerships to enhance the advancement, implementation, and application of information technology. All stakeholders should work together to develop technologically driven programs and careers with business partnerships. All businesses that need technologically savvy employees and high-tech businesses require even higher levels of expertise. Preparing students and retaining adult workers for these jobs are significant challenges for educators and businesses.
4. Continue to develop and work to increase awareness of co-op programs and career development opportunities for students in Huntington. Educational institutions should further their partnerships with Huntington County Economic Development and the Huntington County Chamber of Commerce to ensure that students take advantage and industries are aware of immersive learning opportunities.



## G. Youth Programs

### • Issues and Findings

Huntington is home to a number of quality programs aimed to help develop the youth of today into responsible adults of tomorrow. While a number of programs exist, the two most popular programs are detailed below.

#### 4-H

Established over 100 years ago, 4-H has grown into the largest youth development program in the United States. 4-H prepares young people to be leaders in their community through hands-on experiences alongside their peers and adult volunteer leaders. In Indiana, the 4-H program is administered by Purdue University and deployed in all 92 counties through Purdue Extension. Locally, the Huntington County 4-H program is comprised of over 700 youth enrolled in 24 clubs, including 25 junior leaders. Mini 4-H, for those in kindergarten through second grade, has nearly 150 program participants and serves as a stepping stone. The most popular local 4-H programs are rabbits, poultry, arts & crafts, swine, goats, foods, photography, and shooting sports. In recent years, the 4-H robotics program has also grown in popularity, with nearly 60 participants from grades 6-12. Most 4-H events, including the annual 4-H Fair, take place at the Huntington County Fairgrounds located adjacent to Hier's Park on the southeast side of the City at 631 E Taylor Street.



#### Parkview Boys and Girls Club of Huntington County

Since 2001, the Boys and Girls Club has been enabling the youth of Huntington County. A new 20,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose facility was constructed on E. State Street in 2014. The organization promotes lifelong character and integrity building among its members through programs and activities designed to provide children with a positive outlet for energy. Currently the local club, which has been nationally recognized, has around 1,100 members and averages 330 kids each day. The club is the official latchkey provider for HCCSC and a designated 21st Century Community Learning Center. The club focuses on three priority areas: academic success, character & citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. Popular programs offered at the club include dance, 3D printing, cooking club, and Lego league (junior robotics). The club also offers homework help and tutoring through its 19 junior staff members and maintains a club garden where members grow produce to use in various programs.



*The newly expanded Parkview Boys & Girls Club*

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Continue to support programs and organizations which promote youth development and leadership.



## IX. TRANSPORTATION

*“Properly integrating land use and transportation requires a clear vision and policy framework developed through active citizen participation. Communities must more broadly define the objectives of the transportation system and how its performance is measured”*

*-Whit Blanton, “Integrating Land Use and Transportation”-*



## A. Introduction

Transportation systems enable motorized and non-motorized movement through the community. The overall system determines the degree of interconnectivity that is necessary within the community, along with all of the individual elements that contribute to pedestrian and vehicular circulation. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides information about Huntington's transportation system and network decisions, so that Huntington's elected officials will be better prepared for critical transportation issues in the future. Recommendations made in this chapter are for use in formulating long range transportation plans that will help to guide Huntington's transportation investments.



*Road signs direct visitors along Huntington's highways*

Huntington is located along US 24, just west of Interstate 69, and along major regional highways. Highway corridors provide regional and cross-country access to Indianapolis, Dayton, Chicago, and points beyond. Huntington's locational advantage, including interstate access and the intersection of a number of highways provide employment opportunities to residents and marketing opportunities for businesses. City residents would like to minimize the impact of through traffic and create a sense of identity at primary entranceways into Huntington. Strong support has been voiced for a system of sidewalks, multi-use trails that provide residents with safe and enjoyable access to services, destinations, school campus areas, and the downtown.

It is important to understand Huntington's transportation system and its critical relationship to land use throughout the City. A basic element of this relationship is the functional classification of the roadway system. An analysis of Huntington's transportation system provides insight into what types of transportation improvements will best meet the needs of Huntington residents. This analysis includes a review of Huntington's existing transportation network, vehicular accidents, and traffic counts. An examination of the existing traffic counts, accident incidents, planned improvements, and current level of public transportation provide the existing conditions for the area. The recommendations made for improving the overall transportation system take into consideration all of the information received from proposals regarding the addition or management of existing signals and signage, plus intersection and roadway improvements. Additionally, the expansion of an interconnected multi-use trail system is an importation part of a successful transportation system.

A dedicated transportation plan should meet local, state, and federal planning requirements while addressing local, cost-effective, multi-modal transportation needs, including: street, transit, freight, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements. The goals, objectives, and recommendations identified in this chapter provide transportation options for residents, visitors, employees, and companies doing business in Huntington. The ideas presented will suggest opportunities that can make it more convenient to walk, bicycle, and utilize other transportation options in order to be less auto-dependent as a community. Ultimately, the transportation plan created from this document should provide a balanced transportation system that supports neighborhood and countywide connectivity while promoting economic development, without detracting from the welfare of the community.

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

### **• Goals**

1. Provide for the current and future transportation needs of Huntington through the implementation of transportation improvements that facilitate local motorized and non-motorized travel, minimize the impacts of regional traffic through the City, and facilitate access to local businesses and other destinations.

### **• Objectives**

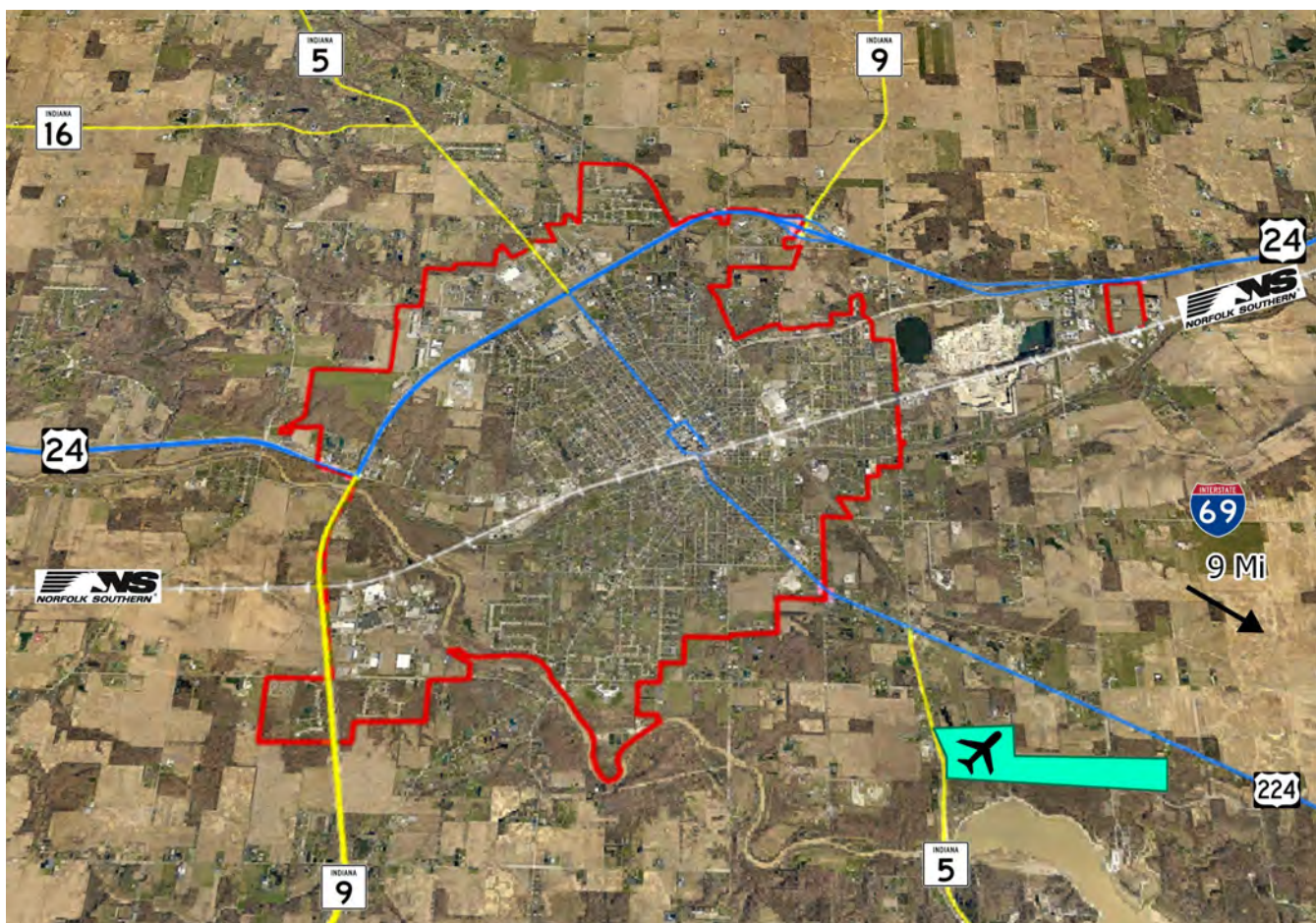
1. The City will develop a balanced transportation system, including motorized and non-motorized networks.
2. The network of public rights-of-way and easements that create travel access corridors are the primary infrastructure for all modes and will be managed and expanded in a manner that preserves or improves the capacity, efficiency, and safety of all modes collectively.
3. Improve the level of safety at locations where warranted, striving to design solutions that are consistent with the character of Huntington.
4. Provide and design for pedestrian safety in the form of designated crosswalks and safe, identifiable access to trails and other alternative transportation routes.
5. Develop traffic calming measures to reduce speeding and discourage through traffic on local streets where applicable.
6. Implement prioritized maintenance and improvements, which work in coordination with development initiatives.
7. Identify alternative funding mechanisms that maximize local dollars spent on transportation improvements.
8. Utilize traffic volumes on major highways as an opportunity to attract businesses and residents.
9. Design all transportation facilities, in a manner which allows them to contribute to a positive and attractive visual image that fits within the desired character of the community.
10. Include streetscape designs, where applicable, which improve the physical appearance of public roadways and facilitate non-traditional transportation uses.
11. Enhance the primary entry points or gateways into the City of Huntington.
12. Build upon current design standards that require new developments to provide sidewalks or pedestrian paths and pursue the installation of missing sidewalks in critical areas.
13. Examine existing truck routes to ensure that they are both relevant and being properly enforced in order to minimize congestion, improve safety, and maximize the lifespan of transportation improvements.



## C. Transportation System and Existing Network

An analysis of Huntington's existing transportation system provides insight into the types of transportation improvements that will bolster the overall quality of life for its residents. This analysis includes a review of Huntington's existing transportation network, vehicular accidents, and traffic counts. The recommendations for improvements to Huntington's transportation system take into consideration all information from proposals regarding transportation improvements. Non-motorized transportation improvements are growing increasingly popular and benefit the community in a variety of ways. It is important to understand the overall transportation system and its integral relationship to land uses throughout the City.

Interstate 69 (I-69) is one of the most important roadways to the City of Huntington and the region, running north-south in eastern Huntington County and allowing access to a number of large metropolitan cities. The numerous State and Federal Highways that intersect within the City of Huntington have developed as high growth corridors within the city limits, allowing land uses to grow in a linear manner. They serve as key locations for a variety of land uses; including residential, commercial, and industrial. Collectively, this regional transportation network allows residents and businesses access to communities of varying size in almost any direction from Huntington with relative ease.



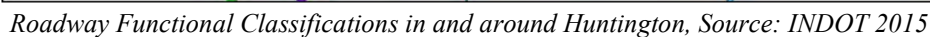
*An oblique view due north identifying major transportation elements of the City of Huntington.*

## D. Street Functional Classification

The role of a street is based upon its functional classification, utilizing factors such as capacity, length, spacing from other streets, and the types of traffic it serves (short versus long distance and the percentage of truck use). In theory, major streets designed to move traffic are classified as either arterials or collectors, while streets which are designed to provide access to adjacent land uses with little or no through traffic are classified as local streets. In reality, many roadways serve a number of classifications, based on their user.

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) functional classification categories are summarized below. All streets within the City of Huntington are considered “urban” by state and federal agencies for purposes of planning and funding. A detailed map of each major classification can be found on the following page.

- **Interstate:** The highest category, interstates serve a majority of long distance travelers throughout the area and thus are designed to carry the highest traffic volumes. The City of Huntington does not have a designated Interstate within its corporate limits.
- **Principal Arterial Freeway/Expressway:** Often linked to statewide travel or travel to nearby states, freeways and expressways are typically U.S. Highways. They handle a large volume of traffic and are comprised of separated, dual lanes of travel. U.S. 24 is the only freeway/expressway within the City of Huntington.
- **Principal Arterial:** Also referred to as a major arterial, this is the highest classification of roadways that are under local jurisdiction, although some state routes share the same designation. These arterials often have linkages to expressways through interchanges and therefore move large volumes of traffic throughout the City and to and from major destinations from within.
- **Minor Arterial:** This classification serves trips of moderate length and moderate volumes, usually with a lower design speed than principal/major arterials. Minor arterials are intended to provide links to and between major arterials, but have a greater emphasis on access to adjacent land uses. Ideally, this classification should not penetrate within identifiable neighborhoods.
- **Collector:** These streets serve as a link between local streets and arterial streets. Collectors provide both access and traffic circulation within larger residential, commercial, and industrial areas. Low to moderate traffic volumes are typical, and they may have a wider pavement width or design speeds than local streets.
- **Local Road:** Local roads and streets make up the highest percentage of streets within the City of Huntington. Their primary purpose is to move traffic from adjacent land uses to the arterials, sometimes via collectors. Their design speed is typically low, as are their volumes. Through traffic on these streets is deliberately discouraged, often times by design.



U.S. 24 wraps around the city on the north and west sides, and provides access to cities such as Fort Wayne to the northeast and Wabash to the southwest. It also intersects with State Road 9, State Road 5, and US 224, which provides it with linkages in all directions. The location of this highway has played an integral role in attracting industrial land uses that have quick access to an express route, such as its connection with I-69. Along the U.S. 24 corridor, a mixture of land uses exist within the City of Huntington, while mostly vacant land exists along this corridor as it moves out from Huntington. This freeway corridor is an important part of the overall transportation network within the City of Huntington and brings local, regional, and national travelers to the area. In 2017, two-way traffic along U.S. 24 between its interchanges with State Road 9 averaged 16,517 vehicles per day. This represents a 37.8% increase as counts averaged 11,986 in 2007 and 10,716 in 2001 respectively. Signage, landscaping and related corridor improvements will help to provide an identity to the area and attract travelers. Distinct uses, or wayfinding signage will assist in establishing Huntington as a destination instead of a pass-through area.



### Principal Arterial

Huntington has a number of principal arterial roadways, including: State Road 5 (south of US 24 and north of Riverside Drive), Park Drive, First Street, Old US 24, Old Indiana 9, and Etna Avenue. The most heavily used is US 224/State Road 5 just south of US 24, with 10,013 vehicles per day in 2017. This route through town is an important north and south linkage for the region. Similarly, the same route saw 9,983 vehicles across the twin bridges at the Little River in the same time period, an important route for both local and regional travelers. As with traffic counts from freeways/expressways, these numbers have surprisingly decreased over time in a majority of locations as well. This is even as dependence on the automobile has increased and less dense land uses have developed. Further investigation would be required in order to help determine why this has happened.



*Park Drive, a Principle Arterial in the City*

### Minor Arterial

Nearly all of Huntington's minor arterial roadways are classified as local streets, meaning that they are under the jurisdiction of the City of Huntington or Huntington County. Most of Huntington's minor arterial roadways traverse residential neighborhoods, these routes include: CR 200 N, Briant Street, Broadway Street, Cline Street, Condit Street, Division Street, Guilford Street, Hitzfield Street, Home Street, Jefferson Street (south of Riverside Drive), Joe Street, LaFontaine Street, MacGahan Street, Market Street (Cherry Street to Condit Street), State Street, Taylor Street (Jefferson Street to Broadway Street), Tipton Street (Jefferson Street to First Street), and Waterworks Road. These routes allow both local and out of town traffic to navigate from district to district and link to principal arterials and freeways/expressways.

### Collector

Collector Streets within Huntington include: Ash Street, Cherry Street, Condit Street (south of Market Street), CR 500 N (from Stults Road to Old Indiana 9), Dimond Street, Esther Street, First Street (south of Wilkerson Street), German Street, Riverside Drive, Salamonie Avenue, St. Felix Drive, Stults Road, William Street, Wright Street, and Yancy Street. These streets are typically only accessed by local residents and serve as routes which allow them to travel within a district and adjoin adjacent arterial roadways. These roadways typically do not yield to other routes, except those of a higher functional classification, such as arterials.



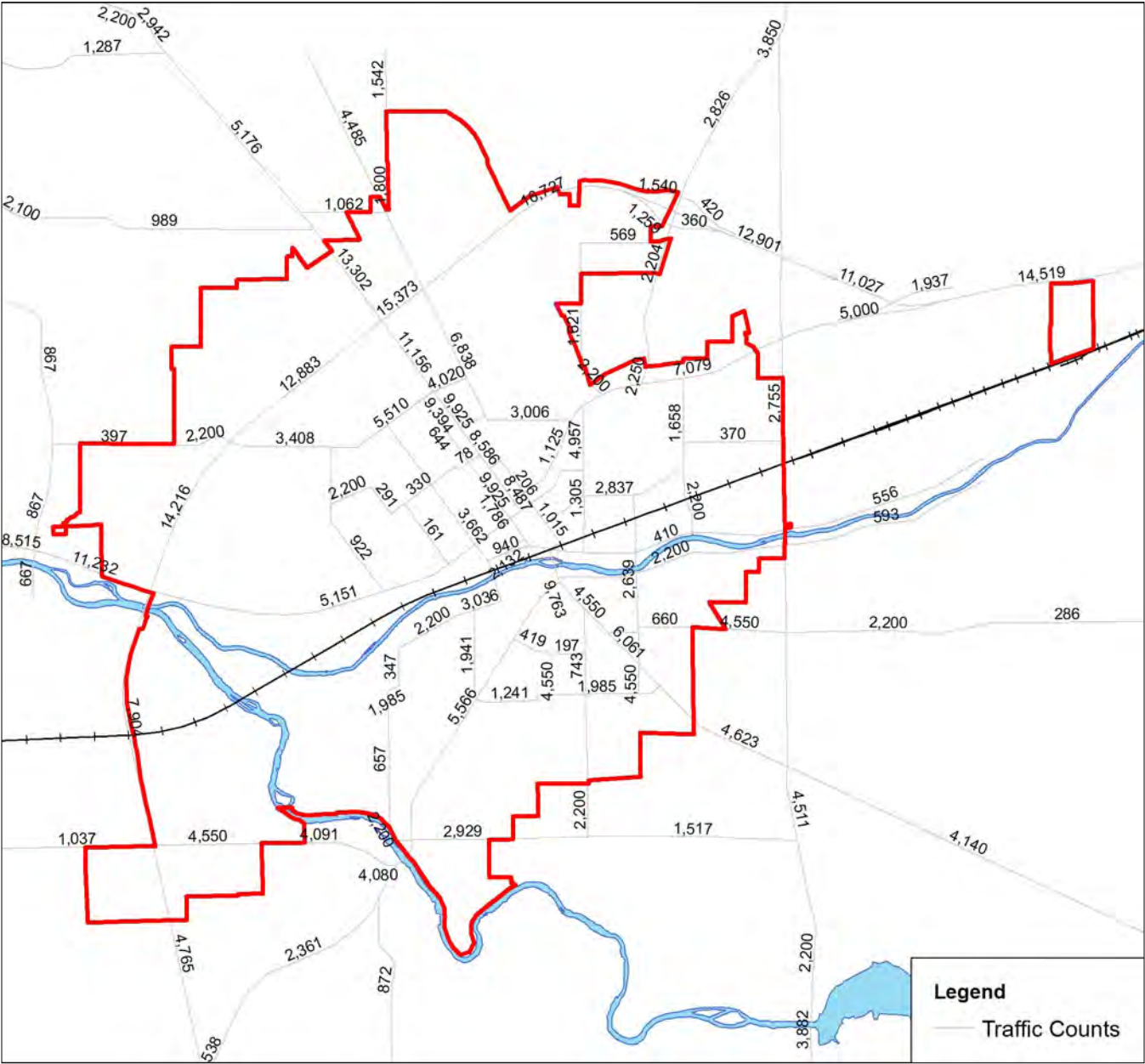
*Salamonie Avenue, a Collector Street gets repaved*

### Local Road

All other streets not previously mentioned or shown on the previous map are classified as local roads and intended to only handle neighborhood scale traffic volumes. These street classifications may change over time as new development occurs and roadway improvements are made.

E. Average Daily Traffic

The following map and table list the average daily traffic volumes for traffic count stations located around Huntington on local, state and federal roadways. A count of average daily traffic (ADT) is taken on a road over a 24-hour period, counting vehicles in both directions. The magnitude of traffic observed is used to measure how near maximum capacity the existing roadway is and over time determines the rate at which traffic is evolving (increasing or decreasing). An ideal traffic count for a two-lane roadway is about 18,300 ADT.



ADT traffic counts in and around the City of Huntington, Source: 2012 - 2014 INDOT



Based upon historical traffic counts (from 2001-2017) traffic has fluctuated over time on a majority of state and federal roadways in and around Huntington, with some segments seeing increases and others experiencing decreases. Among the greatest decreases in traffic include US 224/State Road 5 (from Riverside Drive to Taylor Street) at -37.8% and US 224/State Road 5 (from the railroad tracks to Riverside Drive) at -19.7%. Roadways that experienced an increase in traffic include US 24 (from State Road 9 to Old US 24) at 57.0%, and US 24/State Road 9 (from Guilford Street to State Road 9) at 44.5%. The disparity between the counts is widespread (from low to high differences) and without a more detailed analysis, little can be determined about its significance, beyond the fact that overall, about the same number of vehicles (local and out of town) are passing through Huntington. It is possible that alternate routes or significant roadway improvements outside of Huntington have caused vehicles counts to shift accordingly in conjunction with more efficient routes. The historical traffic count data is illustrated in the table below.

Roadway	From	To	2001 Count	2007 Count	2017 Count	7-year change
US 24	Rangeline Road	Park Drive	11,010	11,928	13,086	9.7%
US 24/State Road 9	Park Drive	State Road 5	13,640	10,672	13,547	26.9%
US 24/State Road 9	State Road 5	Guilford Street	16,040	12,243	17,162	40.2%
US 24/State Road 9	Guilford Street	State Road 9	14,770	13,043	18,842	44.5%
US 24	State Road 9	Old US 24	11,330	9,941	15,605	57.0%
US 24	Old US 24	CR 600 N	15,730	15,284	16,885	10.5%
US 224/State Road 5	US 24	Home St/MacGahan St	14,280	12,076	10,013	-17.1%
US 224/State Road 5	Home St/MacGahan St	Park Drive	10,480	9,336	8,523	-8.7%
US 224/State Road 5 SB	Park Drive	Railroad Tracks	7,300	3051	2449	-19.7%
US 224/State Road 5 NB	Railroad Tracks	Park Drive	7,300	6,165	5,038	-18.3%
US 224/State Road 5	Railroad Tracks	Riverside Drive	22,110	10,989	9,983	-9.2%
US 224/State Road 5	Riverside Drive	Taylor Street	11,470	9,466	5,890	-37.8%
US 224/State Road 5	Evergreen Road	US 224/State Road 5 Intr	6,000	4,686	4,734	1.0%
State Road 5	CR 600 N	CR 500 N	4,760	4,309	5,154	19.6%
State Road 5	CR 500 N	US 24/State Road 9	13,810	12,834	12,731	-0.8%
State Road 5	US 224/State Road 5 Intr	Waterworks Road	5,240	4,518	4,797	6.2%
State Road 5	Waterworks Road	CR 100 N	4,610	3,696	3,087	-16.5%
State Road 9	CR 100 N	CR 200 N	3,860	5,387	4,877	-9.5%
State Road 9	CR 200 N	US 24/State Road 9 Intr	8,120	6,934	8,870	27.9%
State Road 9	US 24/State Road 9 Intr	CR 600 N	3,130	2,496	2,456	-1.6%
US 224	US 224/State Road 5 Intr	Meridian Road	4,840	4,089	4,047	-1.0%

Source: INDOT ADT Traffic Counts (2001, 2007, 2017)

### Accidents

Traffic accidents, termed “crashes” by traffic engineers, are one factor used to identify problems within the roadway system that may need corrected. The number of crashes, compared to the number of vehicles traveling along a roadway segment determines the crash rate. High crash rates compared to similar locations may indicate the need for improvements, especially when there is a trend for a particular type of crash. The top ten accident intersections within the City of Huntington for 2018 were:

2018 Top 10 Accident Intersections			
Rank	Intersection	Rank	Intersection
1	23 Crashes - Wal-Mart Drive & Walton Street	6	8 Crashes - W Park Drive & LaFontaine Street
2	16 Crashes - US Highway 24 & N Jefferson Street	7	8 Crashes - Cherry Street & W. Market Street
3	12 Crashes - US Highway 24 & Flaxmill Road	8	8 Crashes - N Jefferson Street & Park Drive
4	12 Crashes - US Highway 24 & Guilford Street	9	7 E Market Street & Warren Street
5	9 Crashes - MacGahan/Home/N Jefferson Streets	10	7 Crashes - US Highway 24 & Stults Road

Note: In 2018 INDOT implemented flashing yellow arrows (to replace protected arrows) at traffic lights on US Hwy 24 intersections. It is assumed that crashes increased slightly at these locations while drivers adjusted to the new signals. Future data review is necessary.

Source: Huntington Police Department

## F. Improvement Planning and Scheduling

The City of Huntington has a street condition inventory that takes into account traffic volume, conditions, and speeds. Currently, roadway improvements and maintenance are based upon complaints, emergencies, new development, conditions, and anticipated costs. The City paves as much roadway as possible each year within its current budget constraints. The budgeted money comes primarily from state funding (gasoline tax and vehicle excise tax). Huntington also completes roadway improvements and maintenance from local funding streams when available, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Local Income Tax (LIT), and the County Wheel Tax.

New roadways are designed and built to current specifications for drainage, width, and safety. When older roads are repaved, they are brought up to current specifications to the extents possible. State and local funds are used for all major road construction that involves capital improvements, curbing, gutters and culverts, design fees, and major roadway redesign. For state designated roadway projects undertaken by Huntington, the City pays a portion of the overall cost (usually 10%-20%) and 100% of any upgrades deemed necessary by the City.

Huntington does not currently have a mapping system for individual city sidewalks, but there is a citywide sidewalk condition survey and the City has made it a priority to address the most hazardous sidewalks in recent years. The installation and maintenance of sidewalks are costly, so Huntington has not traditionally made this amenity a top priority except in certain locations. Currently a Sidewalk Replacement Program exists for homeowners who wish to have their sidewalks reconstructed. This program allows the costs to be almost evenly shared by the City of Huntington and participating homeowners. The city does repair damaged sidewalks based upon complaints, with an overall regard for safety and liability. Currently, sidewalks are installed along a majority of local and primary roadways, but pedestrian signage and designated crosswalks are lacking in some areas.

Currently, with the exception of some larger projects, the City plans to maintain its existing roadway facilities, because funds available for improvements are limited. The table on the following page identifies significant roadway improvements planned to begin in the near future.

Roadway	Improvement Description	Est. Date	Est. Cost
W. Park Drive	Wider travel lanes, pedestrian amenities, drainage, curb and gutter	2019	\$260,000
St. Emily Drive	Storm sewer rehabilitation, road reconstruction	2019	\$456,000
CR 200 N	Widen lanes for future industrial park, aesthetic and safety improvements	2020	TBD
MacGahan Street	Road reconstruction	2020	\$500,000
Roche Street	Curb & Gutter and road reconstruction	2020	\$135,000
Church Street	Curb & Gutter and road reconstruction	2021	\$130,000
Margaret Street	Curb & Gutter and road reconstruction	2021	\$200,000
Warren Street	Curb & Gutter and road reconstruction	2021	\$200,000
Park, Cottage, South & Jessup	Curb & Gutter, drainage, and road reconstruction	2022	\$580,000
George Street	Road reconstruction	2023	\$400,000
Condit Street	Road reconstruction	2023	\$500,000
Division Street	Road reconstruction	2024	\$500,000
Engle Street	Road reconstruction	2024	\$500,000

*Anticipated roadway and related improvements planned by the City of Huntington*

## G. Rights-of-Way

An evaluation of Huntington's rights-of-way will determine the space available for future roadway improvements, sidewalks, landscaping, street lighting, signage, and other amenities. The rights-of-way along Huntington's streets are typically between 30'-60' wide, depending on original traffic volume design. Often, additional rights-of-way must be obtained for major roadway projects in order to accommodate safety and pedestrian upgrades. This right-of-way acquisition is time consuming and costly to projects. Original shallow building setbacks often inhibit this acquisition due to encroachment and separation concerns. In many cases, the existing right-of-way width has lane configurations that are sufficient for existing and projected traffic volumes. It is anticipated that roadways and intersections in need of improvements do not have adequate right-of-way for modern road projects.

## H. Public Transportation

### Huntington Area Transportation

The Huntington County Council on Aging, a local not-for-profit entity operates Huntington Area Transportation (HAT). This service provides transportation throughout Huntington County. HAT is not a traditional public transportation service, as it is funded primarily by local and state sources and grants. Originally organized to provide only senior transportation, the service expanded to all residents in 2001. It operates in a demand-responsive manner, since rides must be scheduled 24-hours in advance. One-way fares range from \$3 within the City of Huntington and up to \$5 in the County, depending on the distance of the trip. Transportation is limited to within Huntington County, with the exception of out of county trips for medical purposes.



## I. Rail

There is only one active rail line within the City of Huntington. Operated by Norfolk Southern (NS), the Huntington District extends a total of 172 miles from Peru, IN to Montpelier, OH. The line connects with the NS Chicago Line and other CSX lines. The single track line has maximum allowable speeds of 50 MPH and features centralized track control. This line is part of a major east-west line for NS with linkages extending from Kansas City to major Michigan markets. The line averages approximately 35 trains per day and carries almost 50 million metric tons of freight per year. Several rail sidings exist within Huntington. The line runs diagonally across the City's grid street pattern and can cause some traffic congestion at rail crossings. Grade separations exist at Broadway St., Grayston Ave., Condit St., Briant St., Byron St., Warren St., Jefferson St., Lafontaine St., and Hitzfield St. The nearest Amtrak station is located 55 miles northeast in Waterloo, IN.



*A freight train at the LaFontaine Street rail crossing*

## J. Air

Huntington is fortunate enough to have its own municipal airport to serve smaller, private, personal, and corporate aviation needs. The airport is located southeast of Huntington along State Road 5. Its proximity to Interstate 69 and the City of Huntington, coupled with its location between Fort Wayne and Indianapolis suggest a greater future potential as part of the overall local and regional transportation system. Given the proximity of larger airports, it is unlikely that Huntington will experience passenger aircraft service. However, it can capitalize on the airport as a catalyst for economic development. Many large companies evaluate the proximity to an airport when making a decision about where to locate. The airport also serves an agricultural function, providing a base for crop dusting and related agricultural/aviation services. The convenience of having a municipal airport attracts many recreational private pilots from around the region, adding to the airports economic impact and the desirability of living in Huntington.



*Huntington Municipal Airport*

Land uses surrounding the airport are diverse and should be developed in a manner complementary to aviation. This may require modifications to the zoning code in order to facilitate development, remain compatible with surrounding land uses, and preserve airport operation standards. Overall, the Huntington Municipal Airport has the potential to be a strong asset for the region to serve residents and businesses. The intent of this plan is to help position the airport to successfully meet the region's future aviation and economic development needs.



## K. Land Use and Transportation Linkages

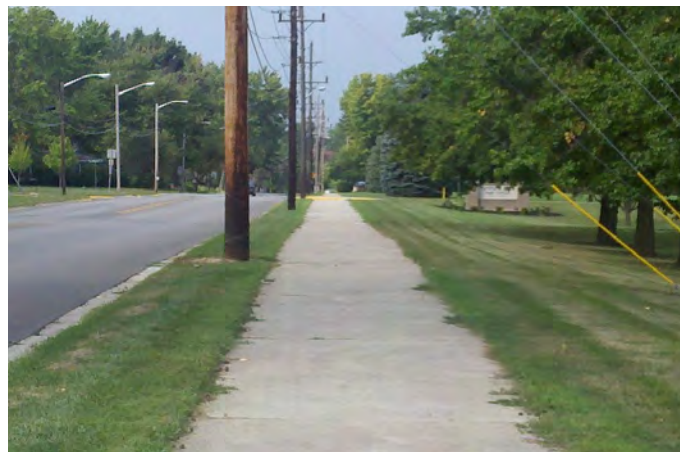
A clear link between transportation and land use is visible in the historical development patterns of Huntington. Transportation routes and access have provided opportunities for residential development. Transportation alone is not the sole factor in determining development patterns; available land supply, low development costs, access to employment centers, and other social and cultural factors have helped to shape Huntington. While a variety of factors, including: available land, low development costs, convenience, and labor markets have resulted in industrial development; industrial land use patterns remain principally related to transportation access. Older industrial uses were traditionally centered near rail lines, while most new development has occurred along major roadways. This historical trend is readily apparent in Huntington.



*US 24 looking eastbound from Guilford Street*

Investment in the transportation system to meet the needs of various land uses has been a priority in the City. Continuous roadway improvements have elevated traffic capacity to and through main commercial and employment areas. Several of the more recent projects have resulted in an addition to the operational benefits of traffic. Significant progress has recently been made towards non-motorized transportation. With the Little River Trail section 1 (formerly the Lime City Trail) on the western edge of Huntington and recently completed portions of the Little River Trail and the Erie Rail Trail, the City has made marked progress on the development of a linked system of non-motorized trails to improve connectivity, both locally and regionally, and quality of life in accordance with the Huntington Trails and Greenways Master Plan.

Transportation investments are intended to ensure a comprehensive transportation system exists in order to preserve the quality of life for residents and retain a desirable business climate. The future vision for Huntington involves a balanced and coordinated, multi-modal transportation system to accommodate and improve growth and development. Thus, recommendations are provided for both the roadway system and other non-motorized modes of transportation (such as sidewalks and trails). A convenient, congestion free, safe, and multi-modal transportation system will continue to be an important goal for the entire community.



*Non-motorized transportation is just as critical as roadways*

While Huntington has control over most of the streets within the City, cooperation from other agencies is critical. The Indiana Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration control the allocation of state and federal dollars for transportation improvements.

## **L. Transportation Management Techniques**

The concept of transportation management is relatively simple; every automobile trip that can be eliminated by giving people other choices will help relieve impacts on the roadway network. In addition, land uses can be arranged or clustered in a manner which results in shorter trips. Every driveway that is eliminated or redesigned will help preserve capacity and reduce the potential for accidents. Current streets may be able to operate better with the incorporation of new technologies, such as signals that respond to actual traffic or informing motorists of alternate routes. Collectively, these ideas will help to address the City's future transportation needs.

### **Traffic Impact Analysis**

One procedure to help ensure that traffic impacts are properly evaluated is to require a traffic impact study/management plan prior to approving site development plans, rezonings, or special exceptions for significant projects. Generally, a traffic study is recommended for a project that would generate 50 or more directional trips in the peak hour or 500 trips in an average day. A well prepared traffic impact study will also address site access issues, such as the potential to share access or utilize service drives. The study should analyze options available in order to mitigate traffic impacts, such as changes to access or roadway improvements. In some cases, the developer may be required to assist in funding necessary roadway improvements in order to help offset the direct impacts of a project.

### **Access Management**

Road widening and intersection improvements are not the only ways to improve traffic operations along a street. One technique to help retain capacity and promote safety, while delaying or avoiding the need for widening roadways is access management. Access management involves comprehensive controls that minimize conflict points, reduce accident potential, and help preserve the roadways ability to carry traffic. Access management standards could be applied to new developments and during roadway improvements to revise existing access that does not meet established standards. The access management strategies listed below provide a foundation for the possibility of a codified access management ordinance. The number of driveways allowed along major streets affects traffic flow, ease of driving, and accident potential. However, reasonable access must be provided for each use. If direct access to the adjacent roadway is necessary, the number of access points should be limited to one where possible. Every effort to limit the number of driveways; and encourage access off appropriate side streets, service drives, frontage roads, and shared driveways will help. The minimum spacing of access points from intersections should be in accordance to applicable standards. Different separations should be developed depending on the classification of the driveway and the classification of the roadway. The points should also take into consideration the possible need for signalized intersections at some point in the future.

Changes or deviations to established guidelines should only be considered if it can be demonstrated by a traffic study that the driveway operation will not result in conflicts with vehicles at the adjacent intersection. The guidelines can also generally be applied to spacing from access points on the opposite side of the roadway. Preferably, major access points should be aligned with major access points on the opposite side of the street. Alternative access should be encouraged along arterial roadways, in the form of shared driveways, rear service drives, or frontage roads. Commercial developments and parking lots should be connected through front or rear service drives. Frontage drives, rear services drives, shared driveways, and connected parking lots should be used to minimize the number of individual driveways along major roadways, while preserving the property owner's access. Frontage roads or service drives should be constructed in accordance with established standards.

**Right-of-Way Preservation**

The right-of-way width and degree of development along several segments of roadway limit improvements such as widening, intersection upgrades, or the addition of pedestrian amenities. Acquisition of right-of-way to accommodate improvements can delay projects and significantly escalate costs. An advanced right-of-way acquisition process can reduce later disruption to homes and businesses that would otherwise need to relocate or undergo substantial site redesign. A cooperative effort to preserve right-of-way in advance of planned roadway improvements can help to address a number of these issues. Two primary methods to evaluate include negotiations to donate land during the development approval process or advanced right-of-way acquisition. In terms of right-of-way donation, landowners and developers often understand the benefit of this mechanism. Land donation can expedite improvements that will benefit the property or development. The advanced acquisition of right-of-way is in contrast to the purchase of such land after the improvement has been designed. This type of acquisition involves a purchase at an earlier date when costs are lower, projects are still in conceptual phases, and project obstacles may be easier to overcome.

**Multi-Modal System Recommendations**

A unified multi-modal transportation system for Huntington, with connections between modes, could provide transportation alternatives to a vehicle. These modes involve linkages between pedestrian and motorized transportation, as these two are the only current modes available in Huntington. This includes the incorporation of trails, greenways, and bicycle routes to aid in the movement of people.

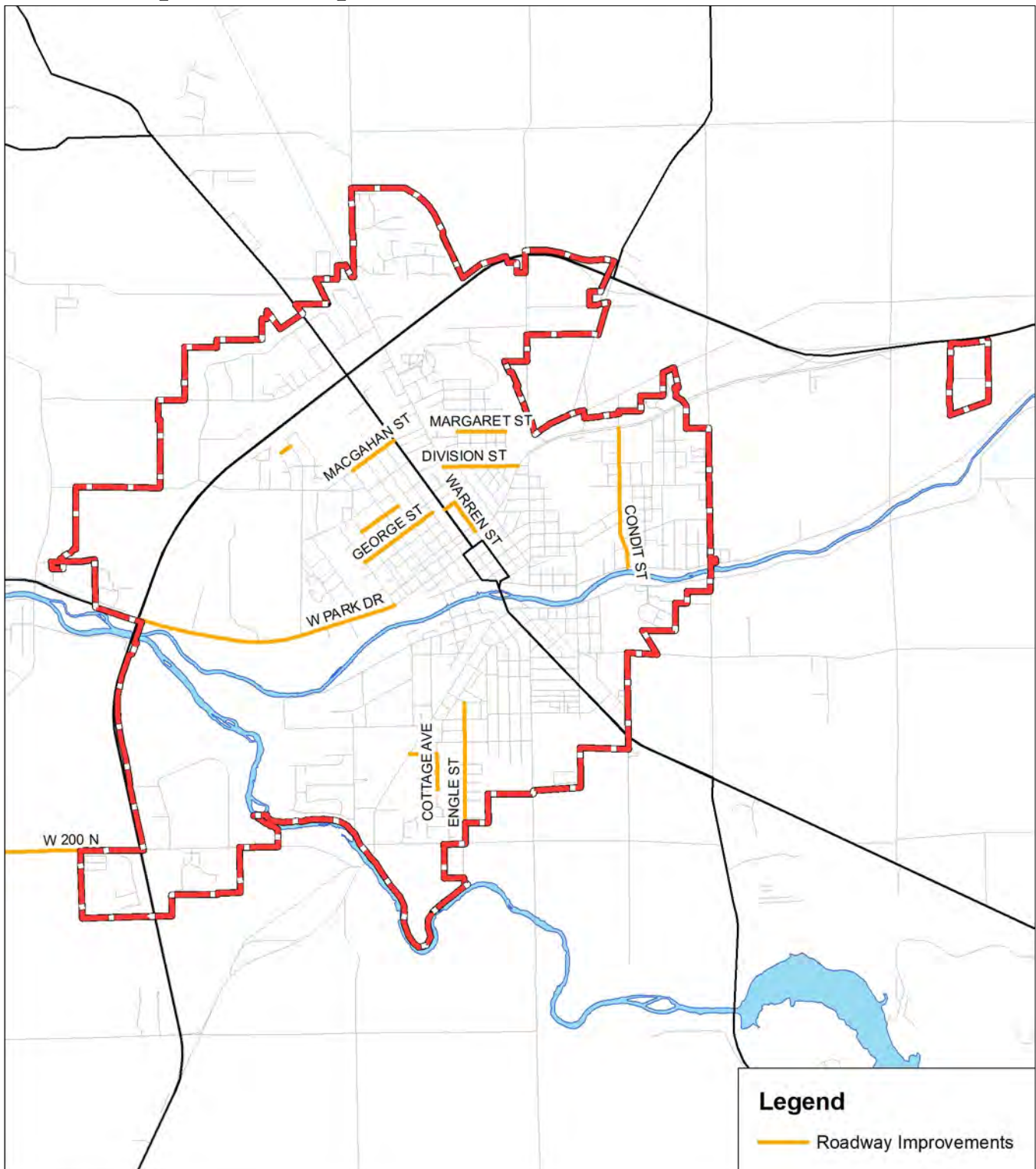
**M. Strategies and Recommendations**

1. The City of Huntington should consider preparing a comprehensive transportation plan to aid in planning for future transportation needs. The document should be a cooperative effort between the Engineering Department, Street Department, and Police Department; with consultation sought from the Plan Commission, County Highway Department, and the Indiana Department of Transportation.
2. Design elements such as street width and scale, presence of on-street parking and sidewalks, block lengths, building setbacks, design speeds, street trees and pavement markings should all be evaluated in order to create uniform standards to be applied to roadway improvements. Focus should be placed upon these elements as a means of improving overall roadway and community character.
3. The identification of specific routes for truck traffic should be included in the created transportation plan. Truck routes should be identified along primary roadways that service commercial and industrial areas in order to guide traffic from state routes onto suitable local streets in order to reach their destination. It is important that this type of traffic be discouraged from traveling through residential areas.
4. Residents of Huntington expect low volumes of traffic and low vehicle speeds within residential neighborhoods. Increases in local traffic, street width, and other factors may cause neighborhood traffic safety concerns. Traffic calming is a way to visually and physically impede speeding within residential areas. The physical change in road parameters and the psychological change in the feel of a roadway combine to reduce the speed of vehicles. Techniques such as speed bumps, speed tables, street narrowing, slow points, chokers, channelization, intersection diverters, street closures, roundabouts, and perimeter treatments should be evaluated on a case by case basis when new roadways are built or existing roadways are redesigned in order to improve safety.

5. Specific corridor improvements (limited to city limits) - It is important to note that any character improvements within the right-of-way may not maximize overall character improvements to a specific area without significant character improvement efforts on the part of private property owners along any given corridor.
  - US 24 corridor: Increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, commercial character, and general maintenance.
  - State Road 9 South: Increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, commercial and industrial character upgrades, and general maintenance.
  - Flaxmill/MacGahan corridor: Sidewalk improvements, alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, and wayfinding signage.
  - LaFontaine Street corridor: Alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, and residential and commercial character upgrades.
  - Park Drive corridor: alternative Transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, and general maintenance.
  - Jefferson Street corridor: Increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, and residential and commercial character upgrades.
  - Etna Avenue corridor: Sidewalk improvements, alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, residential and commercial character upgrades, and traffic calming measures (partially complete).
  - Waterworks Road corridor: wide travel lanes, turn lanes where appropriate, sidewalk improvements and linkages between schools and nearby residences.
  - Guilford Street corridor: Wayfinding signage.
  - First Street corridor: Sidewalk improvements, alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, residential and commercial character upgrades, and general maintenance.
  - Riverside Drive corridor: Sidewalk improvements, alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, and residential character improvements (partially complete).
  - Briant Street corridor: sidewalk improvements, alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, and residential and commercial character upgrades.
6. Street capacity refers to the capability of a roadway to accommodate the expected traffic flow with an acceptable amount of delay or congestion. Traffic engineers measure capacity through a comparison of volumes at peak hours to the original design capacity in order to determine the level of service of a roadway. Roadway improvement projects generally fall into two categories: capacity expansion or capacity preservation. Capacity expansion projects include roadway widening or additional lanes. Capacity preservation includes roadway reconstruction that does not add capacity or enhance the roadway. Major planned transportation improvements illustrated on the map at the end of this chapter should seek to provide for adequate street capacity.
7. When applicable, consult other plans and documents when planning and designing roadway improvements in order to maximize potential benefits. This will allow minor or additional projects to “piggy-back” on a major roadway project and take advantage of cost sharing.
8. Continue to evaluate, update, and implement the 2007 Trails and Greenways Master Plan.
9. Evaluate, implement, and update, the 2020 Huntington Municipal Airport Capital Improvement Plan.



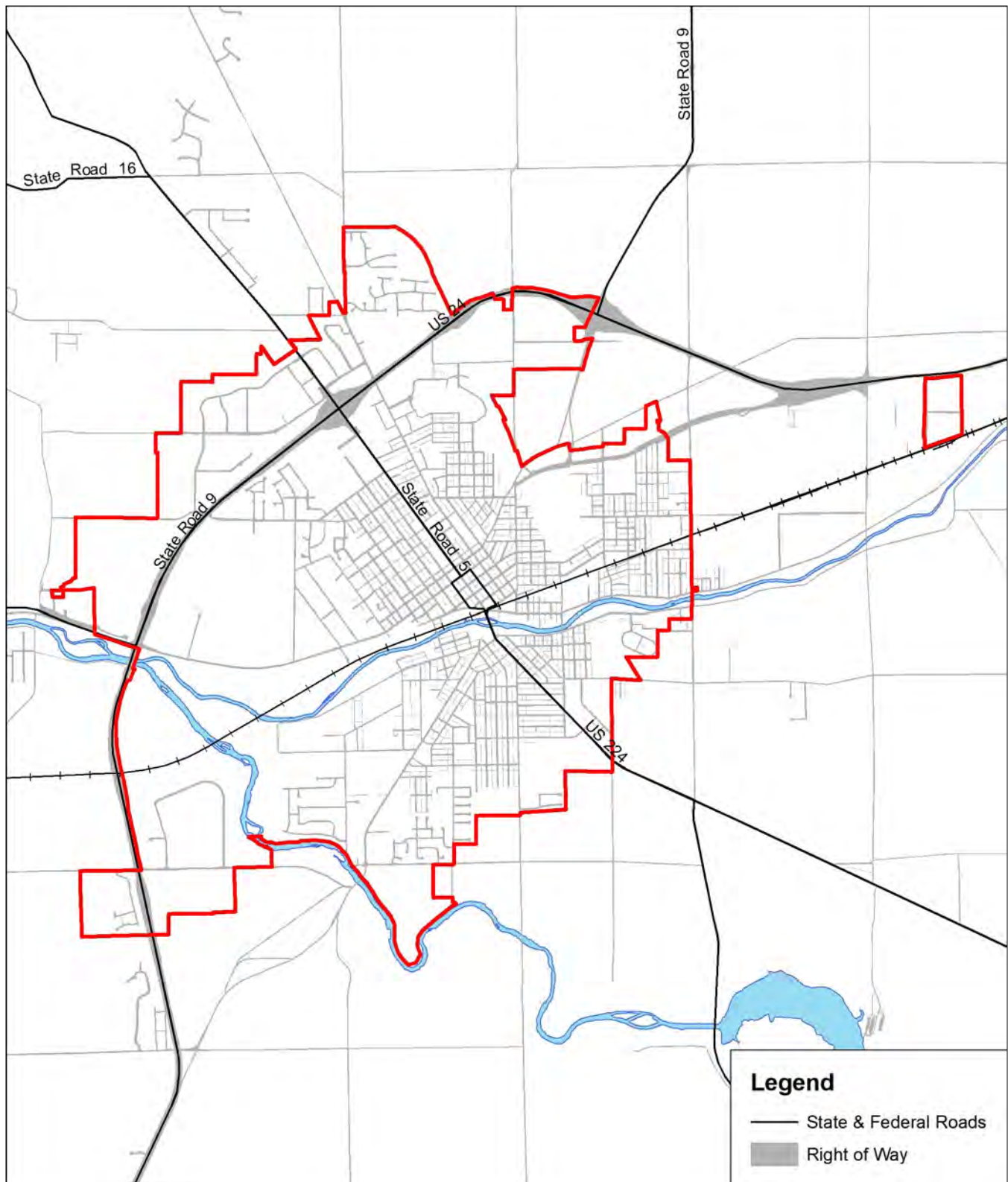
## N. Transportation Maps



*A map showing planned roadway improvements for Huntington within the near future*

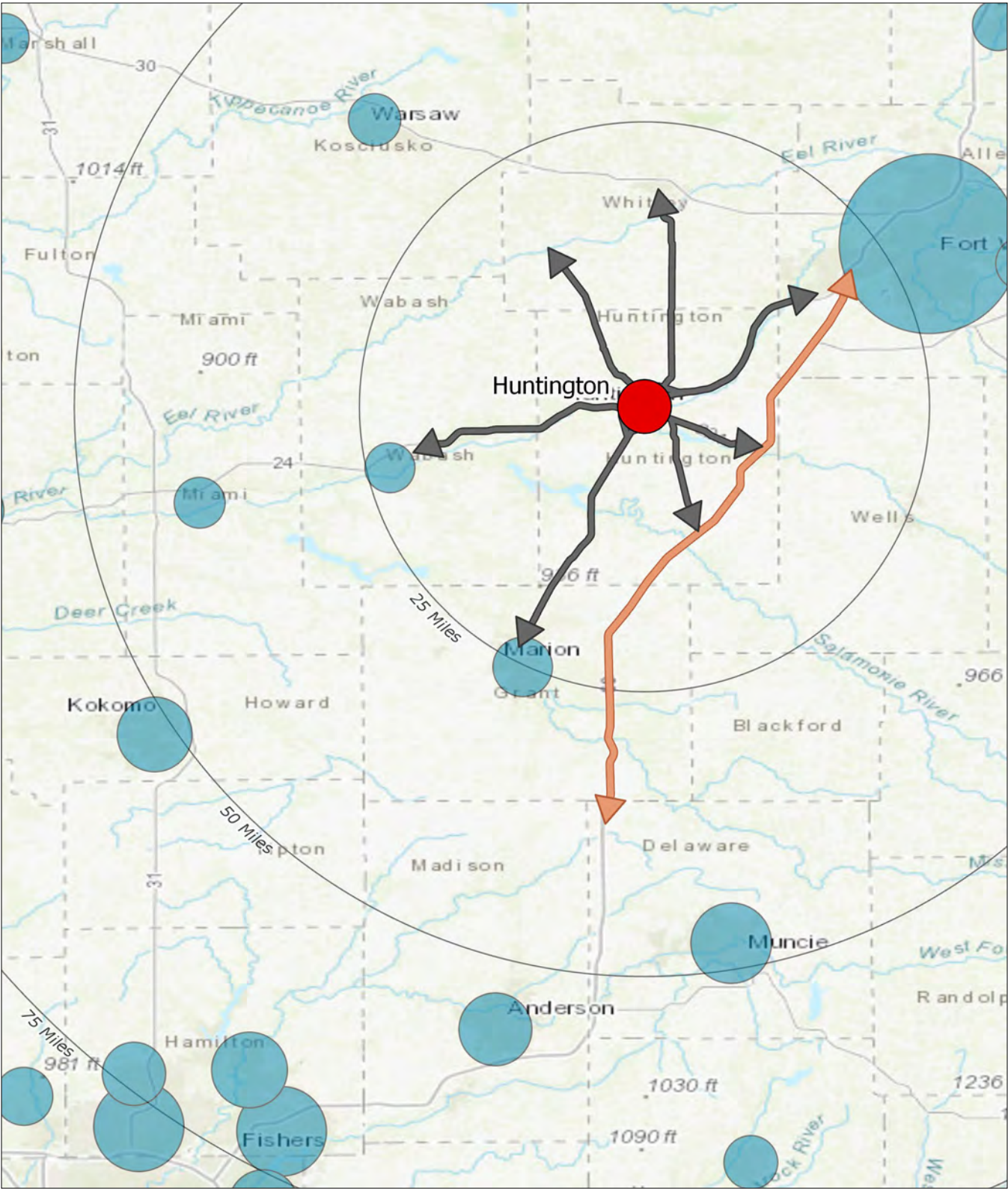


A map identifying targeted corridor improvements for the City of Huntington and their corresponding predominate land use



*A Map showing existing rights-of-way for the City of Huntington and surrounding area*





A Map showing the regional connectivity of Huntington to the surrounding area







## X. HOUSING

*“Scattered housing makes for a better community. A healthy community will have diversity.”*

*-Mike O'Donnell-*



## A. Introduction

Housing is one of the most basic human needs, but housing is more than just shelter alone, it is a complete living environment. This environment becomes a neighborhood with the addition of residents. Neighborhoods have a significant impact on a community's quality of life, because it is where people feel the most secure. A community must provide a variety of quality housing options for its residents in order to be sustainable. Diversified housing options attract businesses and residents that require a variety of housing choices for people of varying socio-economic backgrounds. These housing opportunities are essential for sustaining a changing and developing population base. Even within the same household, a family's housing needs can change over time. A family may move from an apartment to a single-family home as the number of family members grow, then downsize into a townhouse as children leave home and the heads of household retire.

Communities are ultimately responsible for recognizing, understanding, and respecting the essential human need for a "place to call home" for all of its residents, regardless of income level or personal circumstances. The integrity of the community depends on its ability to fully satisfy this fundamental need. Viable housing opportunities must include a broad range of housing types, such as single-family detached, multi-family (downtown and residential sites), assisted living, and affordable housing. Affordable housing is not synonymous with an affordable life; it is best achieved by creating neighborhoods that are not dependent on expensive motorized transportation. Without convenient access to employment, retail, medical services, parks, and recreation; affordable housing options may be irrelevant.

In its primary objective of promoting and enhancing the quality of life for Huntington's residents, the City considers its housing stock to be one of the more critical building blocks of its community development efforts. A community's housing stock largely defines the City's overall standard of living through its physical form, condition, and location. Moreover, the condition and types of housing in an area represents an overall sense of health and vitality for the community.



*A recently constructed single-family home*



*Apartment Units in Huntington*

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

- **Goals**

1. Develop and maintain the quality and variety of housing options, required to adequately meet the needs of current and future residents, while increasing and retaining home ownership.
2. Promote increased residential use as a component of mixed use development projects.

- **Objectives**

1. Continue to promote the rehabilitation of the existing owner-occupied housing stock. Explore funding mechanisms to develop new housing options and upgrade the existing housing stock for homeowners and landlords.
2. Encourage investment opportunities in older properties in order to help maintain property values and enhance neighborhood appearance.
3. Continue to promote and increase affordable home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income households.
4. Promote established neighborhoods as attractive places for people to live.
5. Foster development and redevelopment in areas that are serviced by necessary residential amenities.
6. Promote the organization of neighborhood groups to advocate community pride through neighborhood preservation, enhancement, and safety.
7. Stimulate private development in order to maintain an adequate inventory of single-family lots.
8. Significantly increase the quality and number of urban living options in and around the downtown.
9. Continue to develop and enhance housing options and services for special needs populations.
10. Continue to prevent the encroachment of businesses and other non-compatible land uses into residential neighborhoods.



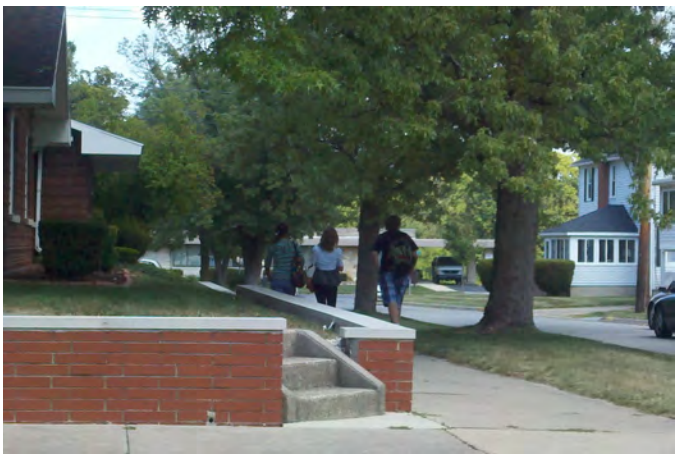
C. Housing Base

• Issues and Findings

Huntington strives to ensure that an appropriate number of housing units are available throughout the City for all segments of its population. As the demographics of the City change and areas go through transitions, the City will need to accommodate a wider variety of housing types, including mixed use, live/work, higher end, and transitional housing; while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods. This variety, along with housing of varying densities will provide for a diverse community, which offers vibrant housing choices to service the entire population.

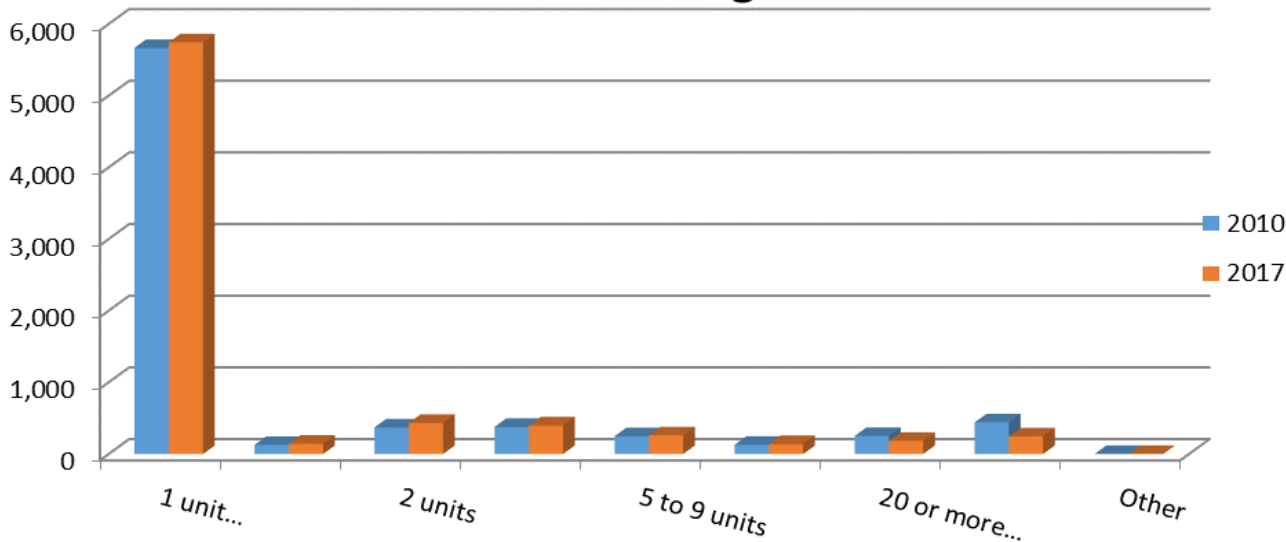
Housing Profile

The City of Huntington had 7,544 housing units according to the 2017 Census, an increase of 1.5% since 2010. Of that housing stock, 76.1% is considered to be single-family detached units, as shown in the chart below and graph on the following page. There has been an increase of 9.6% in 2 unit dwellings. There has also been a 56.5% decrease in mobile homes in that same timeframe. Only 1.8% of the housing stock was built between 2010-2017 as compared to 5.6% from 2000-2010. This historical decrease in new home construction, coupled with the Great Recession, is typical of most older communities, given that the existing housing stock is maintained for a long period of time. This primarily aged housing stock helps to reflect the historic character of Huntington.



Young residents walking a Huntington neighborhood

Housing Units



Source: US Census Bureau 2010 Census & 2017 ACS

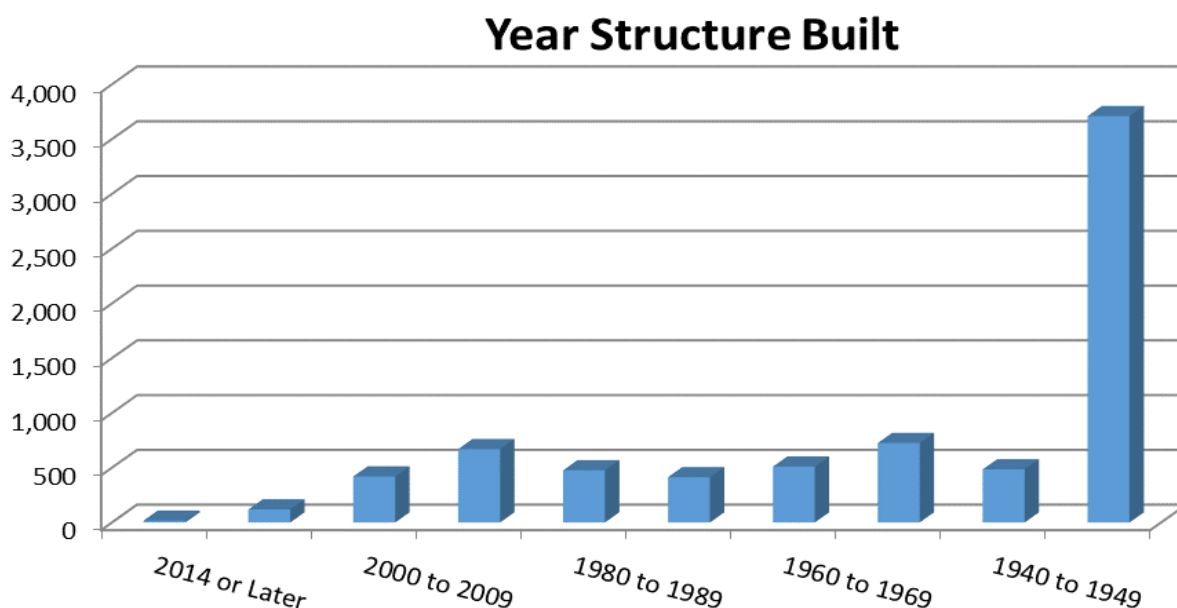
As shown in the following tables, the total number of housing units in Huntington has grown by 1.5% in the past 7 years according to 2010 & 2017 Census figures. Huntington is comprised of approximately 64.8% owner-occupied housing units, an increase of 3.8% since the last Census. The increase in the number of owner-occupied housing units is commensurate to the decrease in renter-occupied units, indicating that a number of structures which had previously been multi-family dwellings or converted from single-family dwellings to rental homes or apartments are either being converted back or demolished. These figures generally illustrate an increase in homeownership rates within the City of Huntington. The average household size for owner-occupied units decreased by 4.2% to 2.51 persons, while the average household size for renter-occupied units remained the same at 2.16 persons between 2010 and 2017.

Housing Unit Type	2000	2010	2017	7-year change
1 unit detached	5,297	5,667	5,744	1.5%
1 unit attached	120	126	144	15.0%
2 units	643	371	433	9.6%
3 or 4 units	408	378	398	4.9%
5 to 9 units	165	248	260	7.3%
10 to 19 units	140	127	139	8.6%
20 to 49 units	75	251	183	-40.7%
50 or more units	92			
Mobile home or trailer	345	441	246	-56.5%
Other	0	0	0	0.0%

Source: US Census Bureau 1990-2000 Census & 2010 ACS

### Housing Supply

The number of housing units that a community has to serve its population is an indicator of housing supply. A level of service can be determined by dividing the total number of housing units by the total population. According to Census 2017 figures, a total of 7,544 housing units existed within the City of Huntington. Given its estimated population of 17,214, this equates to .43 housing units per person. The Housing Supply Product Method provides a way to establish a level of community housing service that take into account variations in average household size. This figure is calculated by multiplying the average household size by the number of housing units per person. A number greater than one suggests that there are a sufficient number of housing units available to service the existing population. For Huntington, the average household size of all types of housing is 2.3



Source: US Census Bureau 2017 ACS

persons, when multiplied by the number of housing units per person (.43), the result is 1.0. This number suggests that Huntington has just an adequate supply of housing units to serve its immediate population, but an increase in population would result in an insufficient number of housing units in Huntington to meet demand.

It is estimated that there are approximately 421 vacant platted residential lots within the City of Huntington; however, not all of these lots are for sale. These lots represent approximately 6% of all residential city lots, an indication that a slight surplus of vacant lots currently exists. Ideally, these unsuitable lots could be utilized by adjacent property owners who may wish to add on to an existing residential structure, construct accessory structures, or simply have more side yard.

### Vacancy

According to the 2017 Census and as shown in the table below, 11.8% of all housing units within the City of Huntington are vacant. This figure is 37.2% higher than the vacancy rate of Huntington County and more than 6.3% higher than that of the State of Indiana. This is a local decrease of 4.1% over the last seven years and more than 1.5 times that of 2000 figures. While Huntington County's historical rates are slightly lower, the State of Indiana's vacancy rate has increased.

The homeowner vacancy rate for the City is currently at 1.9%, which is slightly higher than Huntington County at 1.3% and nearly the same as the State of Indiana at 1.8% according to the most recent Census. Historically speaking, these current rates more closely mimic 2000 levels. The 2017 figures are only ACS estimates and it is believed that they do not fully capture the housing occupancy gains since the recession. Currently, the City's vacancy rate for rental units is 4.9%. This figure has significantly decreased and is even less than 2000 figures. Unlike the overall vacancy and homeowner vacancy rates, the City's rental vacancy rate is lower than that of both Huntington County and the State of Indiana for Census 2017 figures.

Housing Tenure				
Characteristic	2000	2010	2017	7-year change
Total housing units	7,285	7,487	7,544	2.8%
Owner-occupied units	4,623	4,678	4,309	42.7%
Renter-occupied units	2,094	1,891	2,344	-47.8%
Average household size of	2.55	2.62	2.51	-4.3%
Average household size of	2.25	2.16	2.16	0.0%

Source: US Census Bureau 2010 Census & 2017 ACS



A home for sale by owner

Housing Vacancy Rates													
Place	Total Vacant Units							Homeowner vacancy rate			Rental vacancy rate		
	2000	% of units	2010	% of units	2017	% of units	7-year change	2000	2010	2017	2000	2010	2017
City of Huntington	545	8.1%	921	12.3%	891	11.8%	-4.1%	2.2%	5.0%	1.9%	9.6%	14.3%	4.9%
Huntington County	1,027	7.2%	1,587	10.0%	1,377	8.6%	-14.0%	1.7%	3.6%	1.3%	10.5%	14.7%	5.9%
State of Indiana	196,013	8.4%	239,387	8.6%	318,189	11.1%	29.1%	1.8%	2.7%	1.8%	9.6%	12.3%	7.3%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census & 2010 ACS

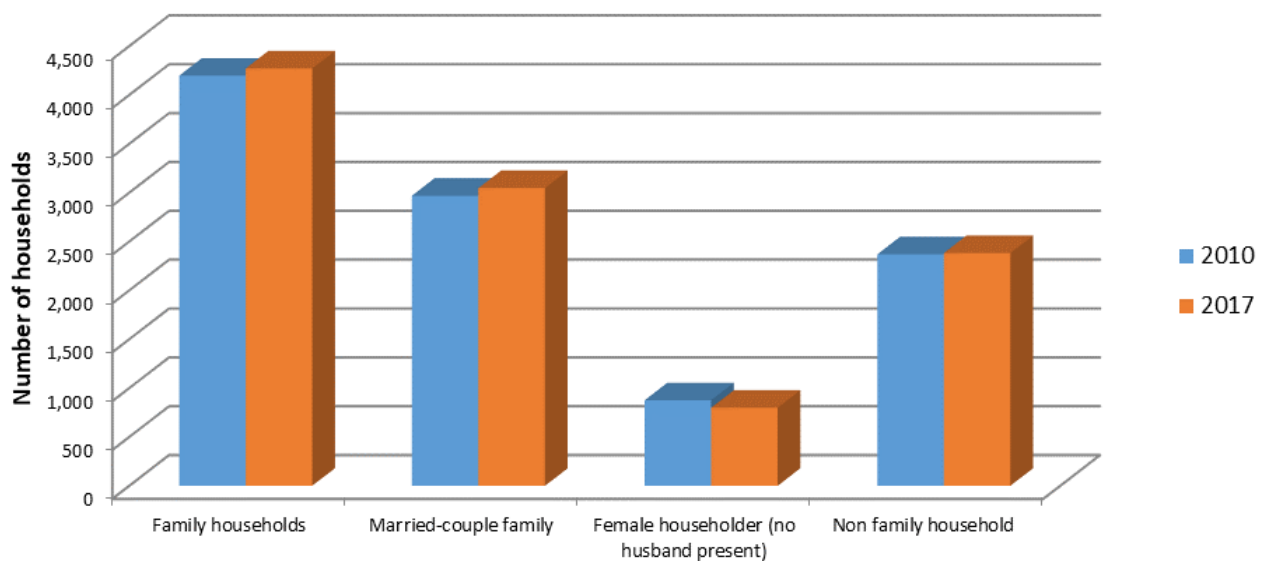
**Household Characteristics and Types**

As the population of Huntington has decreased slightly in the past decade, the number of households has remained similar. The number of households in the City of Huntington increased from 6,566 to 6,653, a 1.3% gain from 2010 to 2017. As shown in the table to the right, family households slightly increased while family households with children significantly decreased, by 1.8% and -10.7% respectively. Married couple families figures also increased slightly, which is a growing trend as fewer marriages take place in young adult years and divorce rates increase nationwide. Huntington has experienced a decrease in the number of female households with no husband present by 8.7%.

Household by Type			
	2010	2017	7-year change
Total Households	6,566	6,653	1.3%
Family households	4,197	4,271	1.8%
With own children under 18	1,993	1,773	-10.7%
Married couple family	2,969	3,047	2.6%
Female householder, no husband present	875	799	-8.7%
Non family households	2,639	2,382	0.5%
Householder living alone	1,996	1,913	-4.2%
Householder 65 & over	1,660	1,433	-13.7%
Average household size	2.48	2.34	-5.6%

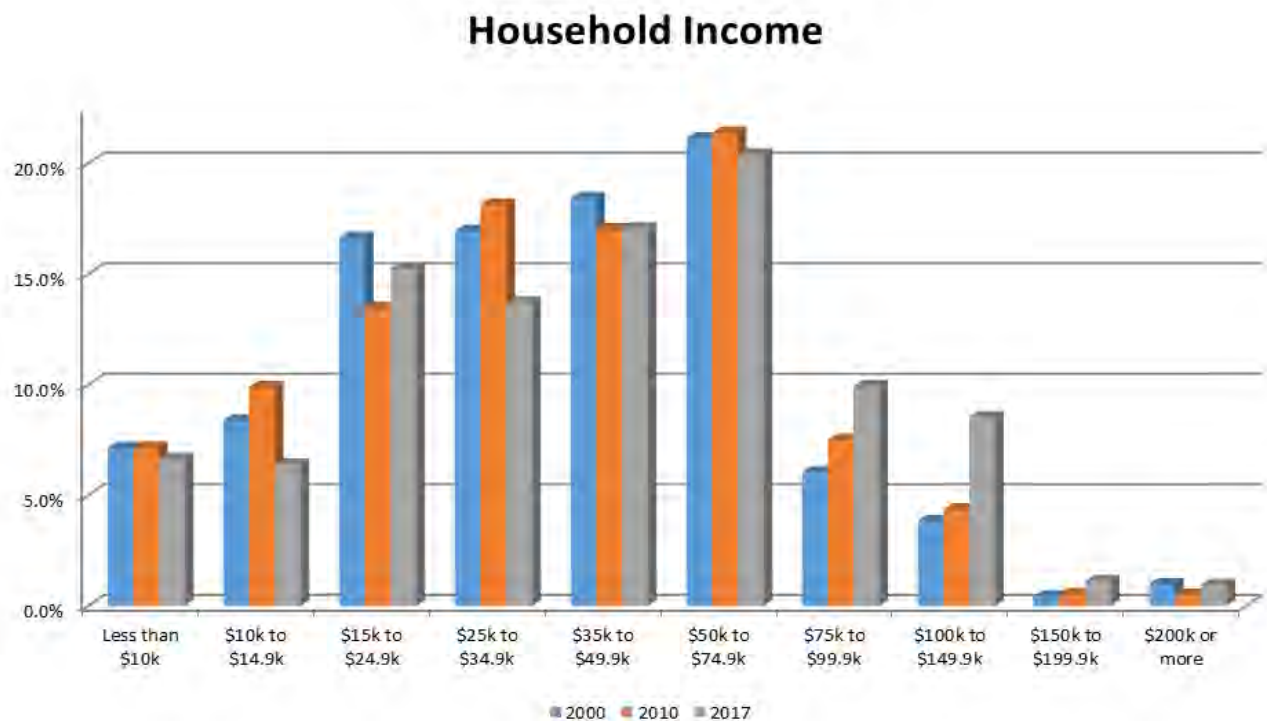
Source: US Census Bureau 2010 Census & 2017 ACS

These figures illustrate that Huntington's household makeup is diversifying; traditional family units are being replaced by single parent and nontraditional household living arrangements. This household shift is in line with national trends. The average household size has also experienced a slight decrease from 2.48 to 2.34 persons. Household size is impacted by variables such as deaths, divorce, children leaving home, and families having fewer children.

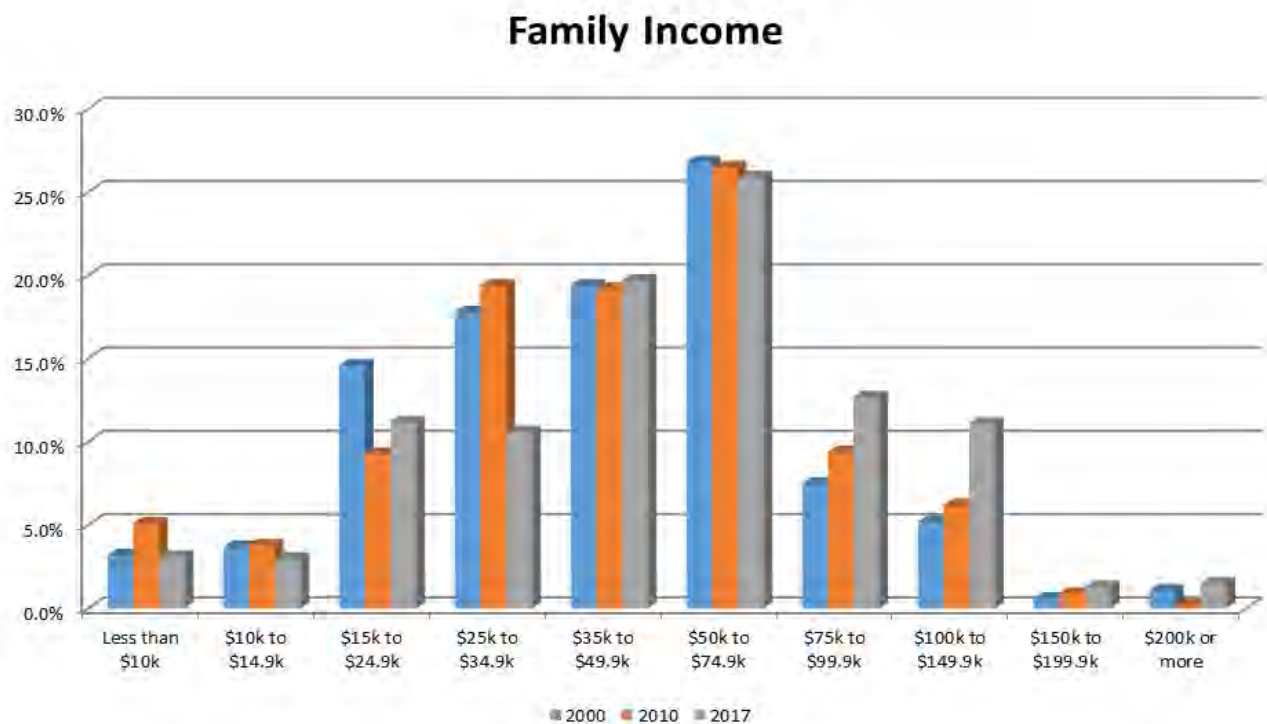
**Households by Type**

Source: US Census Bureau 2010 Census & 2017 ACS





Source: US Census Bureau 2000—2010 Census & 2017 ACS



Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census & 2010 ACS

### Household and Family Income

Income levels have a significant impact on local housing demand. Income is also the single greatest factor when it comes to consumer housing choice. The median household income for the City of Huntington in 2010 was \$35,647 and \$42,302 in 2017, an 18.7% increase. This household income growth reflects the post recession growth in terms of wages. In the last seven years, middle class household income has remained proportionally the same while lower income bracket percentages have decreased and upper income brackets have slightly increased. The largest portion of households (20.4%) fall within the \$50,000-\$74,999 income bracket, a slight decrease from Census 2010 figures.

Family median income, much like household income, experienced an 18.6% increase in the last seven years as displayed in the tables to the right. The median family income for the City of Huntington was \$51,457 in 2017, up from \$43,397 in 2010. Relatively unchanged in the last decade, approximately 26% of all families within the City of Huntington earn between \$30,000-\$34,999.

### Special Needs

Due to lower incomes and the need for supportive services, special needs groups are more likely to encounter difficulty paying for adequate housing than the rest of the general population. This population group also often requires an enhanced level of community services. Three primary types of special needs populations include, but are not limited to the elderly, homeless, and people with disabilities.

### Elderly

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), "elderly" is defined as any individual who is age 65 or older. According to Census 2017 numbers, Huntington has a significant percentage of residents over the age of 65. In total, 14.4% of the total population falls within this category. Historically speaking, this figure has fluctuated over time, from 13.4% in 2010 to 13.8% in 2000 and 14.6% in 1990. This suggests that about the same number of people are choosing to stay in Huntington or choosing to retire within the City. Elderly housing comes in a variety of options, ranging from independent living to intensive medical and personal care. As of 2010, approximately 25.3% of the total households within Huntington have individuals over the age of 65, and 12.4% of those over 65 live alone. Of the total number of households, there are 849 households with persons 75 years and over and 1,660 households with individuals 65 years and older.

Household Income						
	2000	%	2010	%	2017	%
Less than \$10,000	481	7.2%	240	7.2%	442	6.6%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	564	8.4%	650	9.9%	425	6.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,119	16.6%	885	13.5%	1,015	15.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,140	16.9%	1,192	18.1%	912	13.7%
\$35,000 to \$49,000	1,240	18.4%	1,119	17.0%	1,135	17.1%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,422	21.1%	1,405	21.4%	1,358	20.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	407	6.1%	493	7.5%	661	9.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	258	3.8%	287	4.4%	568	8.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	29	0.4%	68	1.0%	74	1.1%
\$200,000 or more	66	1.0%				
Total Households	6,726	100%	6,559	100%	6,653	100%
Median Income	\$35,600		\$35,647		\$42,302	

Source: US Census Bureau 2000-2010 Census & 2017 ACS

Family Income						
	2000	%	2010	%	2017	%
Less than \$10,000	144	3.2%	205	5.1%	133	3.1%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	167	3.7%	159	3.8%	126	3.0%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	657	14.6%	375	9.3%	478	11.2%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	804	17.8%	788	19.4%	453	10.6%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	876	19.4%	778	19.2%	840	19.7%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	1,208	26.8%	1,076	26.5%	1,108	25.9%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	338	7.5%	380	9.4%	544	12.7%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	233	5.2%	252	6.2%	472	11.1%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	26	0.6%	44	1.1%	54	1.3%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	46	1.1%				
Total Families	4,505	100%	4,054	100%	4,271	100%
Median Income	\$43,454		\$43,397		\$51,457	

Source: US Census Bureau 2000-2010 Census & 2017 ACS

Most of the elderly population will require some type of assisted living or continuous care at some point in their lives. Huntington has a large number of senior housing facilities, ranging from senior apartments to assisted living. The level of service and care required increases for individuals as they age. Seniors who live independently still sometimes require specialty home needs such as wheelchair access or ground floor bedrooms and bathrooms. The concept of Aging in Place, or continuous care is growing among private developers. Aging in Place describes a planned, mixed use development that includes an entire continuum of senior housing options within a single geographic and social community.

### Homeless

Homeless persons are defined as individuals or families who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, or an individual that has a nighttime residence such as a public or private shelter, or a temporary institution or public/private place utilized for regular sleeping accommodations that is not meant for this type of use. Due to the size of Huntington, very limited, if any data is available on the current estimated homeless population.

### People with Disabilities

According to 2010 Census figures, there are approximately 799 non-institutionalized people age 18-63 in Huntington County with a disability preventing them from living independently, which corresponds to 400 people with disabilities within the City of Huntington. Around 30% of them have income below the poverty line, with 26% living on a fixed Social Security income. This means that approximately 120 fit this profile and need accessible and affordable housing. There is difficulty in finding accessible housing at appropriate rent prices given the income levels for these individuals even when paired with roommates necessary for receiving supportive services and affordable housing. The City of Huntington does not have a housing authority, which makes it more difficult to utilize federal subsidized housing programs to counter accessibility and affordability issues present with the disabled population.

Household by Presence of People 75 Years and Over, Household Size, and Household Type			
	2000	2010	10-year change
Total Households	6,717	6,566	-2.2%
Households with one or more people 75 years +	845	849	0.5%
1 person household	508	487	-4.1%
2 or more person household	367	362	-1.4%
Family households	352	349	-0.9%
Nonfamily households	15	13	-13.3%
Households with no people 75 years and over	5,842	5,717	-2.1%
1 person household	1,443	1,509	4.6%
2 or more person household	4,399	4,208	-4.3%
Family households	4,065	3,848	-5.3%
Nonfamily households	334	360	7.8%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census & 2010 ACS

Household by Type, Household Size			
	2000	2010	10-year change
Total Households	6,726	6,566	-2.4%
Family households	4,505	4,197	-6.8%
2 person household	1,914	1,737	-9.2%
3 person household	1,045	1,027	-1.7%
4 person household	909	762	-16.2%
5 person household	426	412	-3.3%
6 person household	142	173	21.8%
7+ person household	69	86	24.6%
Nonfamily households	2,221	2,369	6.7%
1 person household	1,888	1,996	5.7%
2 person household	285	284	-0.4%
3 person household	22	47	113.6%
4 person household	26	23	-11.5%
5 person household	0	11	1100.0%
6 person household	0	4	400.0%
7+ person household	0	4	400.0%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census & 2010 ACS

### New Home Starts

According to local building permit data, in 2018, the City of Huntington saw 47 new residential dwellings constructed. These homes had an average cost of construction of \$134,375. Comparatively speaking, the value of new homes in Huntington County is almost twice that of the City. Little conclusions can be drawn about disparity between number of homes since the County is significantly larger than the City, however the rural county areas are growing at a more rapid pace than the urban environment of the City.

New Home Starts						
Jurisdiction	2004		2010		2018	
	#	Avg. Cost	#	Avg. Cost	#	Avg. Cost
City of Huntington	33	\$118,637	7	\$133,400	47	\$134,375
Huntington County	128	\$159,320	37	\$200,006	22	\$254,461

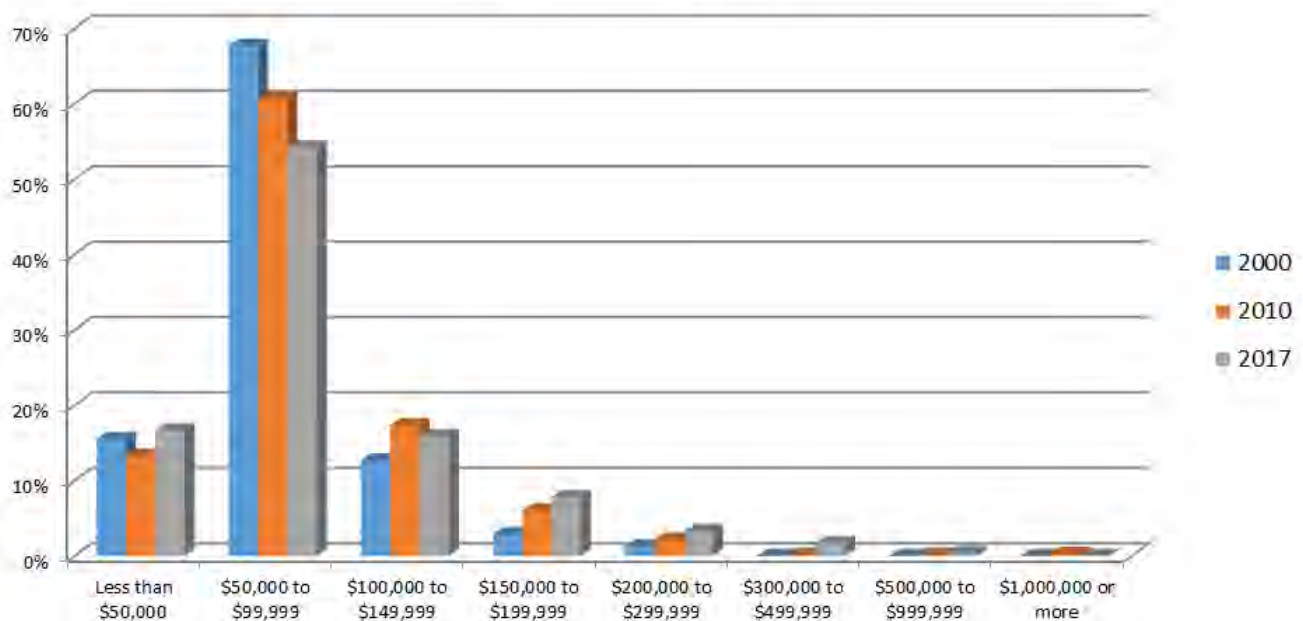
Source: City of Huntington, Huntington County

### Affordability

Housing is generally considered affordable if it consumes no more than 30% of monthly family income. This affordability is impacted by external factors such as interest rates, financing costs, local construction and development costs, infrastructure and utilities, and certain regulatory factors. Income and family size help to define affordable housing for a family or individual. Moderate income is when a family's income is at or below 80% of the county median income for their family size. Low income is defined as 50% of the county median income and very low incomes are families at 30% of the county median income. Formulas based upon these income limits are used to determine eligibility for various federal grants and loan assistant programs.

Families can typically afford to spend two and a half times their annual gross income when purchasing a new home. The median household income for the City of Huntington for the 2017 Census year was \$42,302. When this figure is multiplied by 2.5, the amount a family at median income can afford is determined. For the City of Huntington, this affordability figure is \$105,755, which is 27% below the average cost of new home construction within the city limits for 2018. The chart below identifies historical housing values for the City for 2010 & 2017.

### Housing Values



Source: US Census Bureau 2000-2010 Census, 2017 ACS



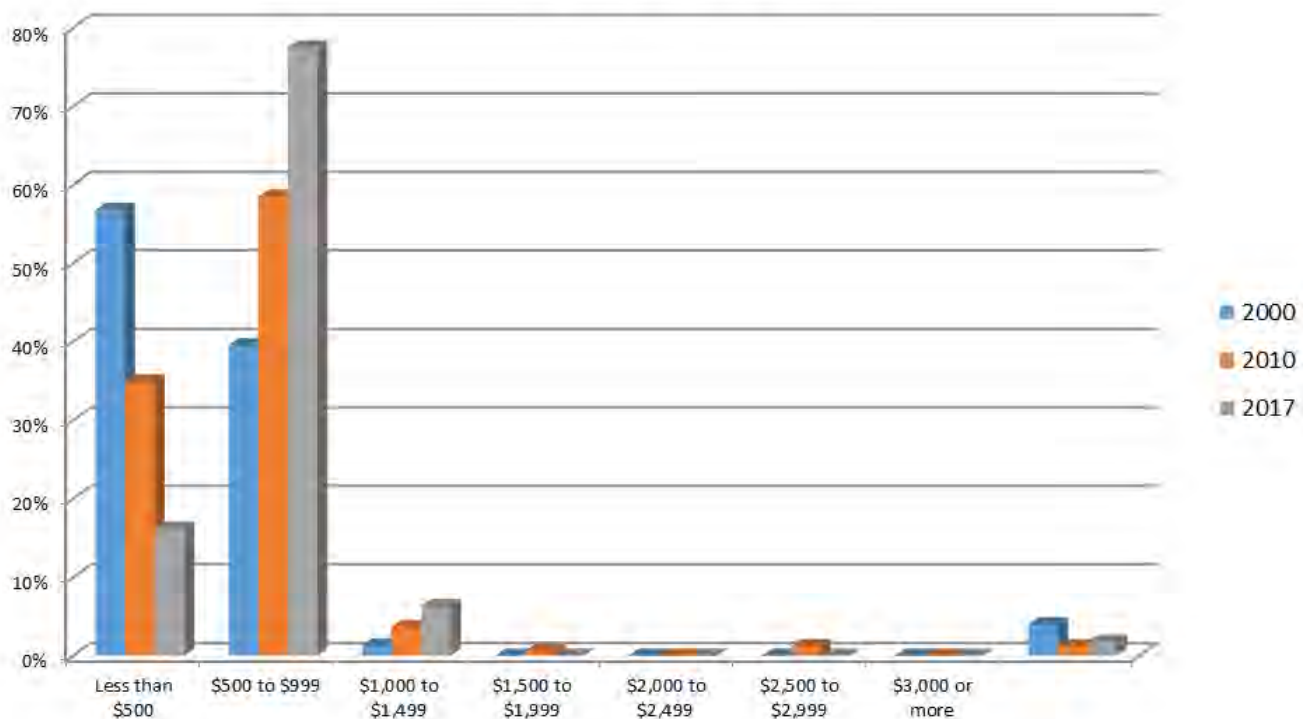
### Rents

Affordable housing must also include rental property where many moderate-to-low income families reside. Low to moderate income families can afford 25% of their monthly gross income going towards monthly rental expenses. According to Census 2017 figures, 16.2% of Huntington's rental units rent for less than \$500 per month, a 53.6% decrease from 2010. Most residents (77.5%) pay between \$500-\$999 for rent each month according to Census 2017 numbers. This figure represented an increase of 32.5% since Census 2010. As shown in the table to the right and chart below, rents as a whole have shifted upwards in the last few decades; with median monthly rent increasing 16.7% to \$678 in 2017 from \$581 in 2010. Affordable housing for low to moderate income residents (families earning between 50% and 80% of County median family income) can secure rental housing for around \$600.00 a month.

Gross Rent						
	2000	%	2010	%	2017	%
Renter occupied units	2,130	100.0%	1,813	100.0%	2,340	100.0%
Less than \$500	1209	56.8%	633	34.9%	374	16.2%
\$500 to \$999	809	39.6%	1060	58.5%	1,784	77.5%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	27	1.3%	66	3.6%	145	6.3%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	0	0.0%	10	0.6%	0	0.0%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0.0%	22	1.2%	0	0.0%
\$3,000 or more	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
No rent paid	85	4.0%	22	1.2%	41	1.8%
Median Rent	N/A		\$581		\$678	

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census & 2010 ACS

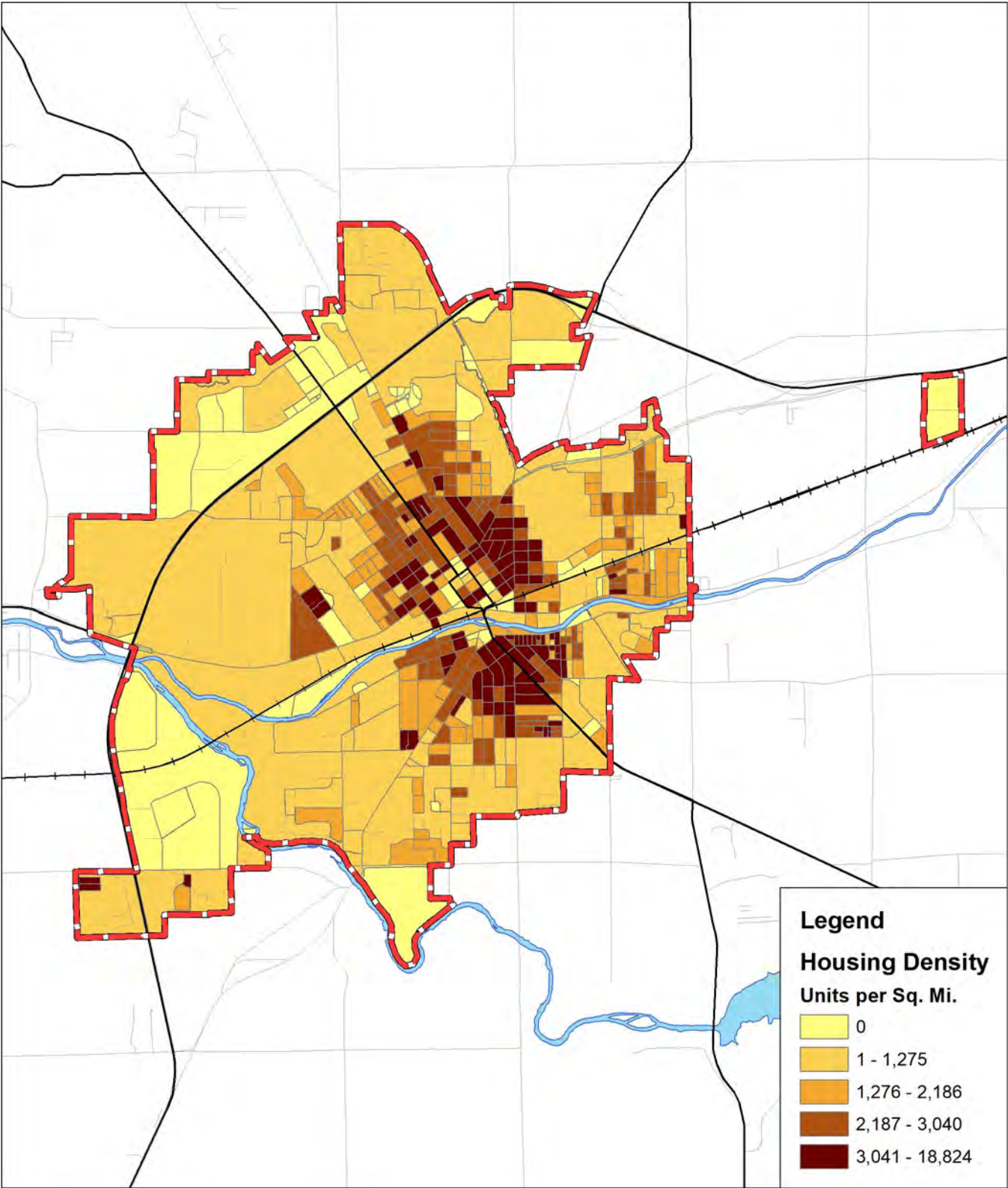
### Gross Rent



Source: US Census Bureau 2000-2010 Census, 2017 ACS

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Promote the maintenance of existing and the creation of new housing options of various types to meet the needs of all residents regardless of socio-economic status.
2. Continue to support the rehabilitation and maintenance of the existing housing stock in a manner which provides for increased visual appeal and improved property values across the City.
3. Continue to pursue grant opportunities which provide for housing rehabilitation, energy efficiency improvements, and the general maintenance of owner-occupied residences for lower income groups who lack the financial resources to undertake such projects on their own.
4. Continue to promote the development of neighborhood groups and other consensus building organizations throughout the City of Huntington to expand vested interest and create community pride. In addition, homeowner education opportunities should be promoted and encouraged in a manner that leads to more sustainable homeownership, thereby creating more stable neighborhoods and improving quality of life.
5. Evaluate and develop strategies which ensure that rental units are properly maintained, protecting tenants and properties. Strategies should obligate landlords and tenants to comply with minimum requirements, while protecting rental housing quality, property values, neighborhood character, and the health of tenants.
6. Strongly consider the development and implementation of residential property codes and enforcement, beyond the existing nuisance code, in order to help preserve property values. It is noted that existing codes and ordinances have proven ineffective in terms of character and value preservation and that existing staffing levels may not be adequate for such a program.
7. Continue to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of existing properties of historical significance. Additionally, continue to evaluate the need to create new historic districts, which allow increased opportunities for the rehabilitation of structures of cultural value, when current physical status allows.
8. Encourage the development of single-family, owner-occupied housing on vacant, orphaned, or underutilized land located in established areas of the City. Encourage quality housing through increased development standards in an attempt to deter blight and urban decay by promoting home ownership. Promote infill housing development that both residents and visitors recognize as being of high quality and aesthetically pleasing to neighborhoods.
9. Evaluate the effectiveness of residential property tax abatements for targeted areas of the City in a manner which preserves the existing housing stock, improves appearance, and increases property values.
10. Support initiatives and programs such as “Aging in Place”, which allow housing options and support services for seniors, in order to promote independence and preserve established neighborhoods.
11. Continue efforts towards establishing permanent and transitional housing options which provide subsidized housing for disadvantaged/disabled populations on a short term basis between life events or to those residents needing permanent support.
12. Promote neighborhood scale agriculture such as rooftop and community gardens, farmers markets and other appropriate limited agriculture that helps to increase locally sourced foods.









## XI. PARKS AND RECREATION

“Greenways and trails offer a new way of looking at how a community’s cultural, historic, recreational and conservation needs fit into an overall picture that also includes economic growth. With their emphasis on connections, greenways and trails allow community leaders to consider how existing parks and open spaces can become part of a network of green that supports wildlife, pleases people, and attracts tourists and clean industry.”

*-Thinking Green: A Guide to the Benefits and Costs of Greenways and Trails, 1998-*



## A. Introduction

Huntington has a broad range of established recreational spaces and programs which promote active living, public health, environmental stewardship, and community interaction. Parks and recreational facilities play a key role in the vitality of the community as both a residential and business draw. Existing park and recreation elements, when combined with an understanding of future recreational needs, trends, and a creative vision; can become a catalyst for population growth and improved economic health.

The City of Huntington Parks and Recreation Department oversees and maintains a municipal park system consisting of approximately 201 land acres and 4 water acres of developed and undeveloped land in and around the City of Huntington. Because many of the parks host a variety of functional recreational elements, no clear classification can be determined for each park.



*Sunken Gardens within Memorial Park*

Huntington has begun to develop a focus by capitalizing on its natural features through the development of trails and greenways. Long term plans call for the development of a significant interconnected trail system, which contains regional linkages in addition to local linkages of importance. The trail system is highlighted by a natural river greenway stretching along the Little and Wabash Rivers. Trail and greenway plans aim to improve the health of residents and the vitality of the community through increased quality of life opportunities and expanded possibilities for economic development.

Parks and recreation are more than typical open space and playgrounds, they also include a wide range of activities implemented for the recreational benefit of the community. These programs are important because they capture the interest and participation of those members of the community who may otherwise not become active in the park system. The Huntington Parks and Recreation Department maintains an ever changing program schedule to accommodate different segments of the community. It routinely adds new programs in order to meet the needs and wants of the residents, helping to instill the sense of community in those who participate.

Although this Comprehensive Plan is mainly focused on land use elements within the City of Huntington, it must also make mention of those elements which are of a magnitude that warrant local and regional importance. This can be the case with the number of recreation areas within Huntington County. From the two expansive reservoirs to the number of other locations, there are a variety of recreational areas which contribute to the City of Huntington. These spaces provide nearly endless recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike, while helping to contribute to the local economy.

The recreational facilities of Huntington provide both entertainment and recreational opportunities to the community as a whole. The number and variety of these facilities service all segments of the population in a number of ways. From fostering youth sportsmanship to providing increased quality of life, these facilities create a number of tangible and non-tangible benefits for the City of Huntington

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

- **Goals**

1. Huntington shall strive to enrich the lives of its residents and visitors by providing essential park, greenway, trail, and recreational facilities and access. To provide programs, cultural experiences, and community services that further accentuate the experience of Huntington's park and recreation system, while conserving and protecting Huntington's natural environment.

- **Objectives**

1. Provide an ample amount of recreation areas and facilities in order to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.
2. Ensure that a diverse mixture of recreation opportunities and areas exist, with a focus on current recreation trends and in-demand amenities.
3. Ensure that recreational opportunities are developed in a planned manner and located in areas capable of serving the entire community, so that all residents are afforded the same amenities.
4. Ensure that existing and future recreation areas and facilities are maintained at a high quality in order to project a positive community appearance.
5. Expand recreational amenities in the downtown area, specifically near the Wabash River as a way of encouraging tourism and providing expanded economic development opportunities.
6. Create linkages between recreational areas and facilities, primarily through the development of trails and greenways, in order to provide numerous quality of life benefits and alternative transportation opportunities.



## C. Parks and Playgrounds

### • Issues and Findings

The City of Huntington's parks, open spaces, playgrounds, athletic fields, and waterways cater to a wide range of active and leisurely recreational activities. Most of the parks and recreation facilities are outdoors and the primary activities include sports, walking, jogging, and simply experiencing the outdoors. Huntington maintains no select park model, as existing parks range from neighborhood size to larger community parks. Some parks maintain specific purposes, while a majority of parks meet the needs of a variety of users. The City maintains child-friendly park amenities, including a range of traditional and state-of-the-art playgrounds. Several parks are available for organized sports and private events. Beyond traditional playgrounds and open space, each park contains a number of related amenities which enhance their public use.



*A playground and softball field at Yeoman Park*

When comparing existing facilities to the National Recreation and Parks Association average of 10.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, Huntington enjoys just over or 1.14 times the amount of average parkland. This standard applies to well distributed, accessible, neighborhood and community parks alike. With a Census 2017 population of 17,214, Huntington's corresponding amount of parkland totals approximately 197.71 acres. It is important to note that existing parkland figures include the 101.84 acre Evergreen Park located south of the City of Huntington in unincorporated Huntington County. When removing this park from consideration, Huntington has 0.55 or half the amount of corresponding parkland within its city limits. Note that none of these figures include greenspace or nature preserves not operated and maintained by the City.

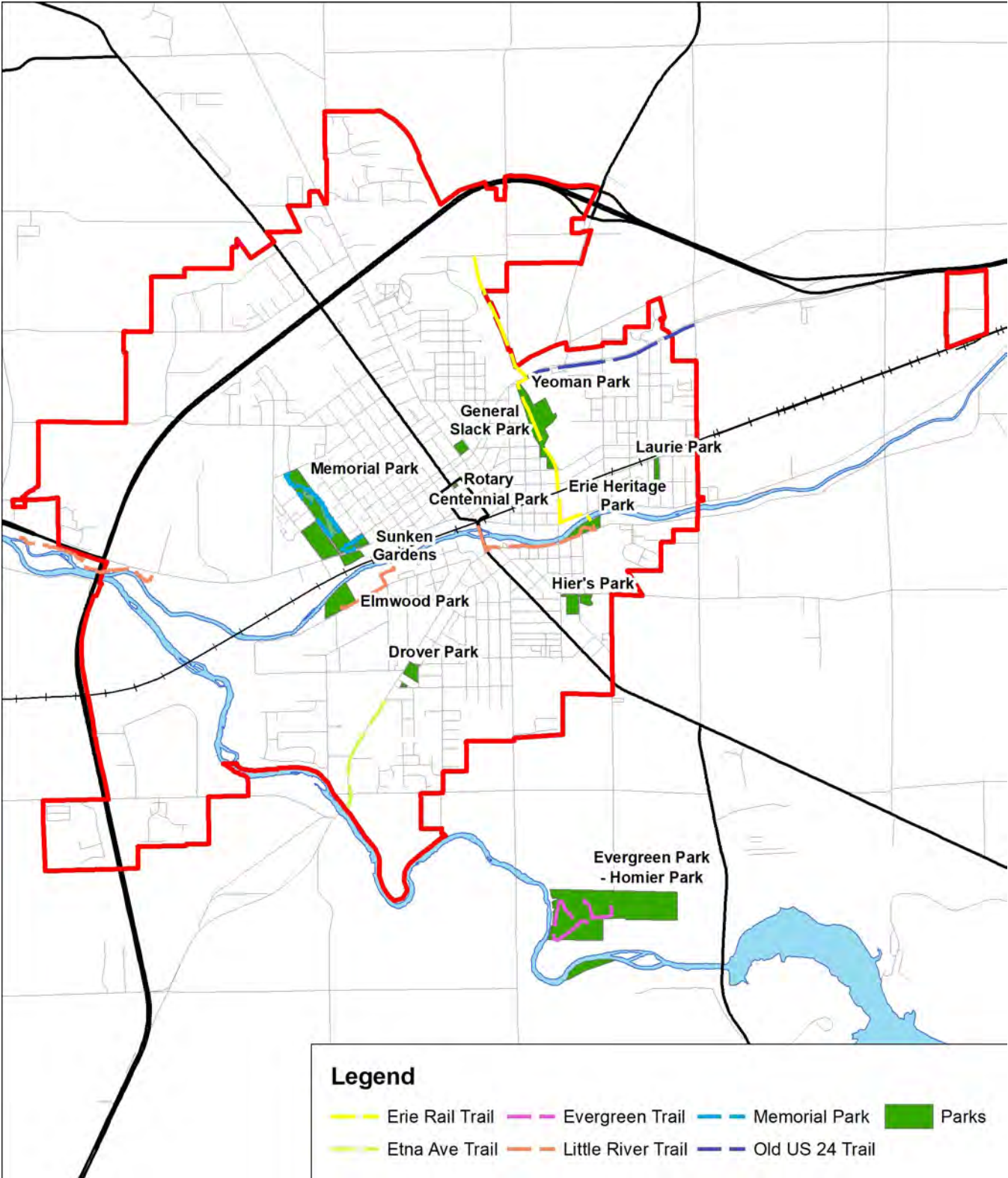
The distribution of parks is equally as important as the amount of overall acreage. While the overall park acreage far exceeds this national standard, certain locations within the City of Huntington do not. Some areas have an abundance of parks; while other areas, particularly newer neighborhoods, have a significant shortage. The use of overall parkland standards must be balanced with availability and need within individual areas of the City. Additional park location criteria, such as service area population and distance, can be used to ensure all residents are adequately served.

The following information was assembled from the City of Huntington Parks and Recreation Department, its most recent annual report, the 2011-2015 Master Plan, and the 2007 Trails & Greenways Master Plan.



*A playground at Hier's Park*





A map showing the location of Huntington's parks and trails

Park	Facilities	Playground	Pavilion	Picnic Area	Restroom	Grill	Pickleball Court	Disc Golf Course	Grandstand	Fishing	Basketball Court	Horseshoe Court	Softball Field	Soccer Field	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Trails	Sledding Facility
Drover Park 1255 Etna Avenue 3.37 acres	Splash Pad	X	X	X	X	X					X							
Elmwood Park 1110 Williams Street 10.33 acres		X	X	X	X	X				X	X		X		X	X	X	
Erie Heritage Park 968 Riverside Drive 5.31 acres			X	X						X							X	
Evergreen Park 1370 Evergreen Road 101.84 acres		X	X	X	X	X		X		X			X			X	X	
General Slack Park 929 Guilford Street 2.02 acres		X	X	X	X	X					X							
Hier's Park 547 S. Briant Street 6.38 acres		X		X	X	X			X				X					
Laurie Park 524 Swan Street 1.81 acres		X	X	X	X	X					X							
Memorial Park 1200 W. Park Drive 42.70 acres	Gardens	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X		X	X
Rotary Centennial Park 551 N. Jefferson Street 0.32 acres	Fountain			X														
Yeoman Park 900 Market Street 22.32 acres	Skate Park Dog Park Pump Track	X	X	X	X	X					X		X	X			X	
Unnamed Greenspace Various locations 1.31 acres				X											X			

Source: Huntington Parks and Recreation Department

**Drover Park** 1255 Etna Avenue  
Established on the former location of Huntington Memorial Hospital on the City's south side, this land was given to the City in 2001 for public purposes. Part of the property was partially used to construct a fire station and the remaining land was reserved for park space. The park is home to the Stanton E. Cope Memorial Playground and the Bendix-Hiner Splash Park, which was recently renamed to the Terry R. Abbett Splash Park. This is one of the most popular summertime parks for children as the interactive water features provide an escape from the summer's heat. The park also contains a playground, pavilion, picnic area, restroom, concession stand, and basketball court. Its location surrounded by multiple neighborhoods and ample parking lots ensure that it's easily accessible.



*A newly installed sign at Drover Park*

**Elmwood Park** 110 William Street  
Located along the Wabash River on the southwestern part of the City, Elmwood Park offers a secluded escape for residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. The park is home to a playground, two pavilions, a picnic area, restroom, grill, basketball court, softball field, two tennis courts, and two illuminated volleyball courts. It is also a popular fishing destination, featuring nearly 1,000 feet of natural riverbank.

**Erie Heritage Park** 968 Riverside Drive  
Located at the intersection of Riverside Drive and Briant Street, the Erie Heritage Park is adjacent to the Wabash River. The park is part of the river greenway trail system. It boasts the rehabilitated abandoned railroad bridge which spans the river to be utilized as a linkage between Yeoman, Riverside, and Hier's Parks. This park contains a pavilion and numerous railroad memorabilia.

**Evergreen Park** 1370 Evergreen Road  
Formerly the site of the County Home, this land was transferred from the Huntington County Board of Commissioners to the City of Huntington in 2003. Evergreen Park is the largest park in the system and has been developed primarily as a vast open space for a nearly endless number of recreation options. The park is unique in that it is the only park within the system that is not located within the City of Huntington; it is located approximately 1 mile south of the city limits along the Wabash River. The site contains the Huntington County Baseball complex. The 4 baseball diamonds and organized sport program are administered by a separate community group through a long term lease. Amenities at the park also include a playground, pavilion, picnic area, restroom, grill, a softball field, a volleyball court, and a scenic paved walking trail.



*The playground at Evergreen Park*



**General Slack Park** 929 Guilford Street

Formerly the site of Crestview Middle School, this land was gifted to the City of Huntington in 2001 after the school was demolished. This urban park is surrounded by dense older neighborhoods, just northeast of downtown Huntington. The park was named in honor of General James R. Slack, a commander in the Civil War. The park contains a playground, pavilion, picnic area, restrooms, grills, and basketball court.

**Hier's Park** 547 S. Briant Street

One of the most visited parks, Hier's park is located in the southeast part of the City. Part of its draw is because the park is home to a number of cultural events of the City, including the 4H fair and Pioneer Festival. The park boasts a playground, picnic area, restrooms, grills, a grandstand, and a softball field.

**Laurie Park** 524 Swan Street

A smaller neighborhood park, Laurie Park is located on the far east side of the City and is surrounded by a residential neighborhood. It is home to a playground, pavilion, picnic area, restroom, grill, and basketball court.

**Memorial Park** 1200 W. Park Drive

Long considered the crown jewel of the park system, Memorial Park has provided an endless amount of recreational activities for residents since its creation in 1924. Paying homage to the park's name is a T33 airplane and tank on display in the recently upgraded Veterans Memorial, which also contains numerous plaques, flags, an anchor, a Purple Heart memorial and a bronze statue. The park is located on the west side of the City of Huntington, surrounded by a mixture of residential land uses of varying intensities. Two large ponds and a linear water feature run the length of the park. The park is home to Sunken Gardens, a former abandoned stone quarry which contains fieldstone footbridges which cross a pond and stone stairways which lead visitors to gardens below street grade. The gardens are centered by a pavilion, one of the most popular locations for outdoor weddings within the City. This public space is also home to one of the City's annual Christmas light displays. Adjacent to Sunken Gardens are the Shakespeare Gardens, an area that contains a pavilion and arbor surrounded by manicured planting beds. Waltonian Gardens is located at the northern end of the park; it contains skillfully crafted shrubbery and delicate planting beds surrounded by water features. Also within the park is the Memorial Hills Disc Golf Course, an 18 hole course established in 2008. Other amenities at the park include a playground, three pavilions, a picnic area, a restroom, grills, 2 basketball courts, a 12 horseshoe ADA accessible complex, three tennis courts, pickleball courts, trails, and sledding facility.



*The main playground at Memorial Park*



*The renowned Sunken Gardens at Memorial Park*

**Rotary Centennial Park** 551 N. Jefferson Street  
Located at the intersection of E. Park Drive and N. Jefferson Street, Rotary Centennial Park was established in 2016 as a joint effort of the City of Huntington and the Huntington Rotary Club in honor of its 100 year anniversary. The park features benches, picnic tables, a large custom clock, and a small amount of greenspace which is popular among downtown residents and pet owners. The park also contains a decorative arch and an ornate fountain which is covered in the winter time by a 32 foot tall Christmas tree that is decorated with more than 6,400 lights synchronized to holiday music. The park and many of its features were funded through private donations by the public, Rotary Club and community businesses.



*The tree at Rotary Centennial Park*

**Yeoman Park** 900 Market Street  
Located on land that formerly contained the Erie Lackawanna railroad yard, this large park is on the east side of Huntington. The site is home to the Hayes-Lemmerz Skate Park, a 1,000 sq. ft. concrete pad with quarter pipes, fun boxes, slide rails, a half pyramid with ledge, street spine, wedges, fly box, low box, and full pyramid. The park also contains a playground, pavilion, picnic area, restroom, softball field, and soccer fields. New additions to the park include portions of the Erie Rail Trail, Barks & Rec Dog Park, and a BMX pump track - the City's only bike track.



*The Barks & Rec Dog Park and Yeoman Park*

## • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Continue to coordinate park improvements with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as updated.
2. Preserve current parks and expand parkland where warranted and when opportunities arise, in order to fulfill the needs of the communities.
3. Implement capital projects and park improvements in conjunction with long range plans as funding opportunities are available.
4. Evaluate the need and effectiveness of incorporating greenspace requirements into the Subdivision Control Ordinance to create open space amenities within major subdivisions, improve connectivity, and reduce the cost burden on taxpayers.



## D. Trails and Greenways

### • Issues and Findings

Trails and greenways provide more than health and recreational benefits for a community. They provide an improved sense of community, increased property values, improved economic vitality, and quality of life. Trail and greenway systems are an ideal way to connect people to destinations of interest and recreation. They provide an alternative means of transportation while promoting physical activity. When planned and designed appropriately, trails and greenways provide safe linkages to destinations of interest. Currently, Huntington features a growing trail network which offers 8.46 miles of paved trails and 0.42 miles of unpaved trails. The creation of the 2007 Trails and Greenways Master Plan and other regional plans cast a vision for a vast network of connected local trails and regional greenways. The goal is to provide for a number of health, recreation, transportation, economic, cultural, and environmental benefits. The plan seeks to utilize corridors to connect to other trails, greenways, and communities. The multi-use trails are targeted for areas of interest and opportunity in order to serve the community in a variety of ways.



*The Erie Rail Trail just east of Huntington University*

Trail Name	Section	Start Point	End Point	Spurs	Surface	Section Length (miles)	Trail Length (miles)	Completed
Erie Rail Trail	2	Little River	Market St	Boys & Girls Club	Paved	1.28	1.91	2017
	3	Market St	Gragg St		Paved	0.62		2018
Etna Avenue Trail	1	Waterworks Rd	Jessup St	Horace Mann School	Paved	0.69		2018
Evergreen Trail	1	Evergreen Park			Paved	0.94		2008
(Former Lime City Trail)	1	Quayle Run	Rangeline Rd		Paved	0.85	2.20	2009
Little River Trail	3	Elmwood Park	Frederick St		Paved	0.43		2015
	4E	Jefferson St	Little River	Schenkel Station	Paved	0.91		2017
Memorial Park Trail	1	Memorial Park			Mixed	1.02		Varies
Old US 24 Trail	1	Stults Rd	Broadway St		Paved	2.12		2018

*Source: Huntington Parks and Recreation Department*

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Continue to evaluate, update, and implement the 2007 Trails and Greenways Master Plan.
2. Improve connectivity throughout the community and create regional linkages with trails and greenways.

## E. Recreation Programs

### • Issues and Findings

In addition to park maintenance, the Parks and Recreation Department has a separate division that is responsible for recreational programming. This includes group and individual programming to promote a high quality of life. Park programs are executed on a year round basis, providing recreational alternatives to residents. Park programs administered in 2018 include the following:

#### **Daddy-Daughter Dance**

This annual event allows fathers and their daughters a chance to enjoy a formal dance, with a different theme each year. This dance has become so popular it has been expanded to three nights, with 800+ individuals attending each year.

#### **Mother-Son Extravaganza**

This annual event is held early each year and allows mothers and sons a chance to enjoy a fun evening of activities together. A variety of games, coloring, and themed activities are provided each year.

#### **Spring Garage Sale**

One day each spring, the Parks Department hosts vendors at two community buildings located at the 4H fairgrounds.

#### **Huntington United Soccer League**

Beginning in 2015, the Parks Department partnered with the Parkview Huntington Family YMCA to form the Huntington United Soccer League. Reaching youths aged 3-18, combining the two leagues has resulted in the league expanding to nearly 500 participants.

#### **Arbor Day**

An annual celebration of trees held at a different location each year in the city. Volunteers work together to add new trees in parks and along trails.

#### **Summer Parks and Recreation for Kids**

The most popular children's program is the S.P.A.R.K. program. This six week summer program provides a range of activities for children when school is out for the summer. Children aged 4-14 may participate in S.P.A.R.K. The program also includes field trips to local attractions, along with games, crafts and other fun activities.

#### **Softball**

One of the more popular adult programs, these May through October leagues feature games three days per week. The Parks Department hosts two leagues, a Men's League and a Co-Ed League.

#### **Yoga in the Park**

In partnership with The Powers of One Yoga Studio, Yoga in the Park was brought back in 2017 as a low impact sports option for residents. Sessions are held in both the summer and fall.



*Children participate in games as part of the SPARK program*

**Toddler Tuesdays**

A free program scheduled during the summer for toddlers. Simple activities that are aimed for this age group, it is held at Hier's Park.

**Star Party**

In conjunction with the Fort Wayne Astronomical Society, telescopes are placed out at Evergreen Park. This program is an educational opportunity for anyone in the community to learn more about astronomy.

**Fall Festival**

A fall themed festival that takes place at Hier's Park one day each year, the Fall Festival is a free community event. Games and prizes make this a fun family evening.

**Movie in the Garden**

A new program developed in 2018, Movie in the Garden takes place in late summer or early fall. Copyrights are purchased for a one night event. Movies are chosen to be family friendly.

**Fishing Day at Memorial Park**

A new program developed in 2018, the Parks Department partnered with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (INDNR) to stock the larger ponds at Memorial Park. INDNR released 300 rainbow trout in the designated ponds. A fishing day was held the next day to encourage fishing and attract anglers to Memorial Park.

**The Great Pumpkin Hunt**

An annual Halloween event, the Great Pumpkin Hunt caters to over 300 children in three age groups as they use flashlights to hunt for candy and prizes in the dark.

**Craft Days**

The Parks Department hosts craft days during the warmer months of the year. Crafts are different each time and are designed so anyone can participate.

**Rotary Centennial Park Lighting Ceremony**

An annual event, the downtown lighting of the tree display has become a favorite among Huntington residents. Done in conjunction with Downtown Huntington's Christmas in the City, the ceremony includes a count down and the Huntington Children's Choir singing carols. The tree remains lit each night through the New Year.

**Sunken Garden's Lighting Ceremony**

The Sunken Garden's Lighting Ceremony takes place the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Warm apple cider and candy canes are passed to residents who come for the event. A local choir also attends to sing carols. The lights remain lit through the New Year.

**Letters from Santa**

Each year the Park's Department becomes Santa's helpers by writing letters to children within the community. Parents register their children to receive a letter from Santa in advance of the Christmas holiday in the Letters from Santa program. Personalized letters are mailed to the children, detailing their unique Christmas wishes and other personal well wishes.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Continually evaluate the number and types of programs offered to the public, with a focus on maintaining high quality and diverse in demand programs.

## F. Recreation Areas

### • Issues and Findings

Although not located within the City of Huntington, several area attractions (public and private) help to increase the quality of life of residents and provide endless recreational opportunities for visitors. These recreation areas provide for an improved sense of community, increase overall property values, and improve the economic vitality of the area. The following list is a summary of the primary recreation areas in and around the City:

#### J. Edward Roush Lake

This State Fish and Wildlife Area was previously a State Recreation Area, this property offers numerous hunting and fishing opportunities among its 7,347 acres of land, 900 acres of lake, and 350 acres of dedicated impoundments. Located just over 1 mile southeast of the City of Huntington along State Road 5, the property stretches a long narrow band approximately 15 miles in length along the Wabash River to the east of the dam's spillway. The lake was formed in 1967 through dam construction and is one of three lakes that operate primarily as flood control to nearly 60,000 acres within the Wabash River Basin. In addition to traditional hunting, fishing, and boating opportunities; the site contains a state-of-the-art public shooting range with skeet and archery areas. It is a popular destination for both residents and visitors alike year round.



*Boating enthusiasts enjoy Roush Lake in the summertime*

#### Lake Clare

Located just outside the eastern border of the City of Huntington, Lake Clare offers fishing, picnicking, a playground, and pavilions. A recently installed fitness park has dramatically increased activity at this location as it is popular among all age groups. The 43 square acre water body is also home to numerous outdoor community recreation events every year. The property is owned and operated by the Huntington Township Trustee.

#### Salamonie Reservoir

Comprised of Salamonie Lake and the Salamonie River State Forest, this 12,000 acre site is located six miles southwest of the City of Huntington. The expansive property, which spans both Huntington and Wabash Counties, acts as a flood control mechanism for the Salamonie and Ohio Rivers and 31,500 acres of adjacent land. There are five designated state recreation areas located on the reservoir property. This multi-season recreation area offers almost every activity imaginable, from hunting and fishing to cross-country ski trails. Possibly the greatest highlight of the grounds is the Salamonie Interpretive Center, which offers outdoor and recreation related interpretative services for both the young and young at heart.



*The Fitness Park at Lake Clare*



### Little River Landing Nature Preserve

In a unique not-for-profit partnership, Acres Land Trust and the Little River Wetlands Project operate the Little River Landing. Located on the western side of the City of Huntington at the confluence of the forks of the Wabash River and Wabash River, the 53 acre site is split between two parcels of land. The 10 acre parcel provides public access from Park Drive and includes section 1 of the Little River Trail. Across the Wabash River, 43 acres of the site also abuts the Wabash River. This portion of the site is only accessible by crossing the river when the water level is low. The site is culturally significant to Huntington, as Native Americans, French voyagers, and European settlers traveled the two rivers bordering this preserve. The site was also once home to part of the historic Wabash and Erie Canal, a primary route for trade and travel in the early days of Huntington.



Map Courtesy: Little River Wetlands Project

### Thornhill Nature Preserve

Operated by Huntington University, Thornhill Nature Preserve is dedicated to the educational enrichment of its students and schoolchildren throughout the region. Located 8 miles north of Huntington, the private site consists of 77 acres. The property features a variety of diverse habitats, evergreen and deciduous forests, a woodland pond, meadows and wetlands. The delicate ecosystem supports a variety of wildflowers, trees, mammals, and birds. Although not open to the public, field trips are encouraged and coordinated with area schools.

### Tel-Hy Nature Preserve

A gift in 1995 from Hy and Lorry Goldenberg, the 41 acre site just south of Huntington is owned and operated by Acres Land Trust. Overlooking the Wabash River, the site includes over one mile of walking trails among a variety of hardwood trees, wildflower fields, and native wildlife including ducks, scarlet tanagers, and wood thrushes.

### Victory Noll Acres

Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters donated 107 acres of prairie and forest property along W. Park Drive and Hitzfield Street to Acres Land Trust in 2017. The property is on the top of a bluff overlooking the Wabash River valley, with the edge of the bluff forming the original bank of the river, first carved out by the rushing waters of a melting glacier.

### Pehkokia Woods

Named for the Miami Indian word for peace, this 97.1 acre tract was acquired by Acres Land Trust in 2010. The property includes hiking trails among its rolling upland woods are dominated by oak and hickory trees, with some maple, beech and black cherry. The upland forest is dissected by a number of 20-foot-deep ravines brought about by natural erosion

## • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Encourage recreational related businesses in proximity to recreational amenities and explore ways to expand existing tourism in order to draw more visitors to the community and increase economic dividends.
2. Utilize the endless amount of recreational opportunities as a marketing tool when attracting new residents to Huntington.

## G. Recreation Facilities

### • Issues and Findings

The City of Huntington and its surrounding region boasts a wide variety of public and private recreation facilities, and continue to work towards broadening the network of recreational programs and facilities across the community. Facilities with an emphasis on leisure, arts, culture, education, sporting, and community activities are constantly being planned. To accommodate the future needs of community groups and organizations as they grow and expand, existing facilities may require either extensive renovation or completely new structures.

#### Golf Courses

The Huntington area is home to a number of privately owned public golf courses as listed below:

- Clear Creek Golf Course
- Dogwood Glenn Golf Course
- Etna Acres Golf Course
- Norwoods Golf Course

#### Police Athletic League (PAL)

The Huntington Police Athletic League, located just beyond the city limits to the east, is primarily a youth sports organization. The group offers organized football, soccer and baseball leagues to the youth of Huntington County. In addition, the 90 acre facility also offers building rental for various events.

#### Merillat Physical Education and Recreation Complex

A component of Huntington University, the Merillat Complex is one of the community's premier fitness facilities. The 86,000 sq. ft. facility is open to the public and features a large field house, 1,500 person capacity gymnasium, racquetball courts, weight rooms, an exercise room, aerobic room, outdoor track, tennis courts, and softball field.

#### Parkview Huntington Family YMCA

Since 1913, the YMCA has been a staple of Huntington. Originally located within the downtown, in 2008 a new 57,000 sq. ft. facility was built on 7 acres located northeast of Huntington adjacent to Parkview Huntington Hospital and Crestview Middle School. Amenities at the facility include a natatorium, gymnasium, fitness center, 2 racket sport courts, dance studios, and preschool facilities. With over 6,000 members, it is the largest recreation facility open to the public in the community.



*The Parkview Huntington Family YMCA*

### • Strategies and Recommendations

1. Continue to promote facilities and organizations which promote the health of the community and its residents. Creating a more desirable quality of life for residents and visitors alike.
2. Continue to promote the facilities and organizations in order to expand awareness of the services that they offer to the community and market them in a regional fashion so that they may play a role in tourism.



## XII. SUSTAINABILITY AND PRESERVATION

*“Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise”*

*- Aldo Leopold-*

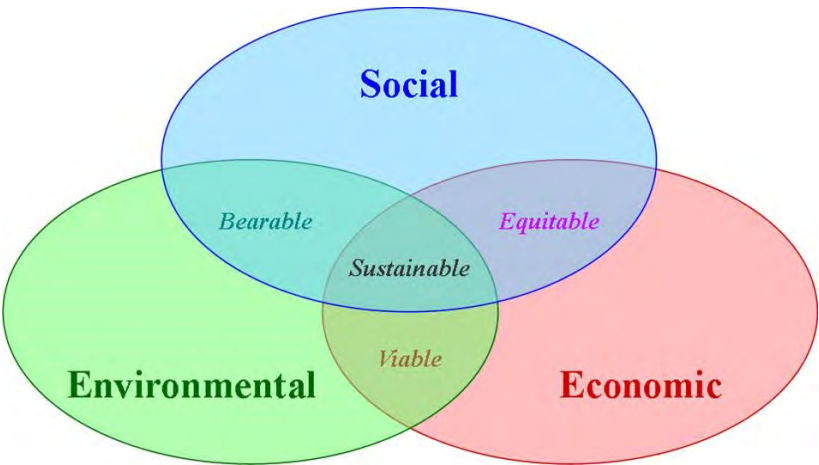




A. Introduction

Sustainable development or sustainability involves three general areas: environmental sensitivity, economic vitality, and social benefit. Sustainability as a concept, allows a comfortable way of living, by obtaining a realistic and achievable balance between the resource demands of the environmental, economical, and social requirements. As illustrated in the chart below, true sustainability is only achieved at the confluence of all three of the factors or areas. The three pillars of sustainability, in detail, are as follows:

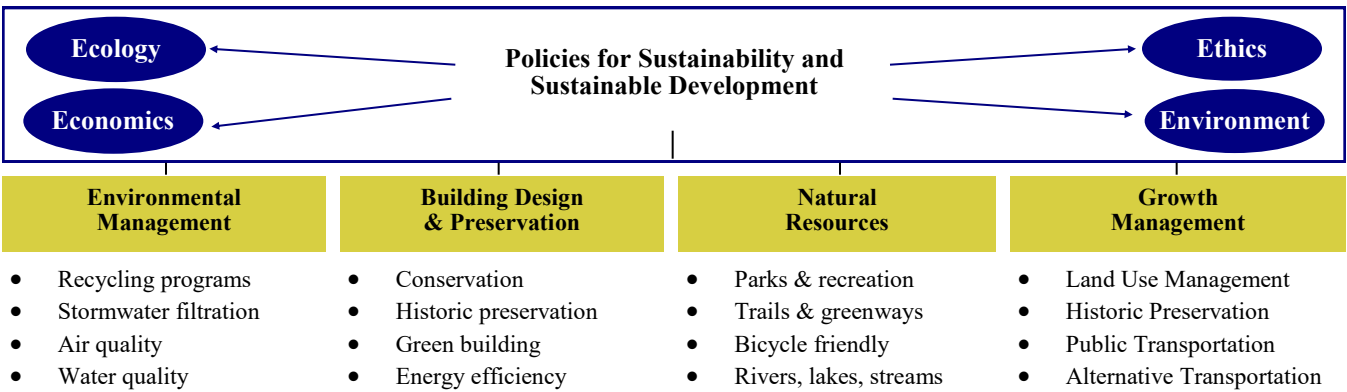
**Environmental:** Includes satisfying basic human needs such as clean air and water, protecting ecosystems and biodiversity, and pollution prevention strategies while both preserving and conserving natural, cultural, and historical resources. Conservation is the protection, preservation, management, or restoration of both natural resources such as woodlands, soil, and water; as well as municipal resources such as the historic preservation of buildings, neighborhoods, cultural monuments, and greenspace.



**Economic:** Includes local reinvestment, meaningful employment opportunities, local business ownership, entrepreneurship, job training, and education.

**Social:** Includes quality health services, safe streets and public places, housing and education, creative expression through the arts, safety from crime, respect for cultural and historical resources, respect and tolerance for diverse views and values, a viable private sector, equal opportunity in decision making, access to government, and a sense of place.

In addition to the general concept of sustainable development, several policies and programs can be enacted or enhanced in order to incorporate sustainability into the future of the City of Huntington. The four areas of influence, as illustrated below, are ecology, economics, ethics, and environment. The objective is to incorporate sustainable benefits through leadership, integrated decision-making, informed decision-making, results-based approach, shared responsibility and cooperation, and environmental stewardship and compliance.



## **B. Goals and Objectives**

- **Goals**

1. The City of Huntington's future growth will be guided by a dedication to sustainability and preservation. The long term health of the community will be quantified by the well being of residents and visitors to the City, the vitality of the economy, and the healthiness of the environment.

- **Objectives**

1. The City of Huntington, through public and private partnerships, will work cooperatively to support and strengthen its neighborhoods and conserve and enhance its local character by planning for appropriate and environmentally sound neighborhood and housing rehabilitation, preserving open and public spaces as focal points of the community, and preserving and conserving historic and culturally significant buildings, places, and objects.
2. The City of Huntington will implement policies to improve and promote a healthier environment by protecting and enhancing greenspace, biodiversity, wildlife, and flora, protecting the quality and supply of water resources, reducing the amount of waste generated, and employing energy efficiency techniques in public buildings.
3. The City of Huntington will promote the re-use of land and buildings through brownfield redevelopment, encouraging growth within existing growth centers, promoting urban infill housing developments, and improving existing structures to accommodate future uses.
4. The City of Huntington will implement policies to improve and promote its transportation infrastructure by expanding and developing transportation systems such as multi-use trails and bike routes, supporting walkability in urban design, and developing routes that will maintain and expand connectivity to existing areas of interest.
5. The City of Huntington will promote sustainable economic development that will increase the vitality and viability of the city and increase the diversity and viability of the local economy by promoting new development that will utilize mixed use projects and multi-use structures, and promoting mixed and balanced developments and facilities that meet the needs of the community.
6. The City of Huntington's growth policy will support long term sustainable solutions and promote respect for the City's rich history and delicate natural and environmental systems.
7. The City of Huntington will promote social and civic responsibility through the development and implementation of community awareness and education campaigns for important issues regarding sustainability and preservation issues and solutions facing the community.
8. Promote renewable energy of all types and scales and ensure they are located appropriately.

## C. Natural Resources

### • Issues and Findings

Natural resources of the City of Huntington include topography, geology, rivers and streams, floodplains, water resources, wetlands, soils, and woodlands. These valuable resources help to define the character and unique identity of the community, while supporting the natural systems which provide for wildlife, a healthy environment, and opportunities for recreation. Careful consideration of the natural environment and its relationship to economic development and social benefit reveal the following issues:

- Interests of property owners and development needs must be balanced with environmental conservation and preservation issues.
- The citizens of Huntington must be protected from adverse impacts that result from flooding and the pollution of land, air, and water.
- Water quality must be valued as an important component of community health. Ground water resources are the single critical source of support for the City's municipal water system and should be protected from potentially harmful land use activities.
- Reducing the amount of stormwater runoff and improving its quality can be achieved through a variety of standards and creative design solutions.
- Wetlands are a vital component of the natural environment and play a significant role in stormwater management. When feasible, such areas should be preserved and/or mitigated in conjunction with development.
- Wildlife habitat preservation should be considered as an integral part of open space preservation.
- The City of Huntington needs to consider soil quality as an important natural resource and essential element to the natural ecosystem of the community. Preventing soil erosion and ensuring soil quality preservation are important issues which should be addressed.

The specific characteristics of Huntington's natural resources and the role in which they play in land use and development are as follows:

#### **Topography**

Topography is the surface elevation of natural and manmade features. As shown in the map at the end of this chapter, the topography of Huntington is generally flat within the city limits. The City's lowest elevations can be found along its river corridors, from there the elevations increase almost 130 feet to the north around the US 24 bypass and slightly less than 100 feet at the intersection of SR 5 and US 224 to the south. The topography or slope of the land is important in terms of land use and development because elevation changes can dictate site suitability or substantially increase development costs. Land use implementation must also make note of topography when assigning zoning district classifications, as improper designation can have a detrimental impact on community growth, land, and development costs.

#### **Geology**

Geology has played an important part in the historical development of Huntington. Nicknamed the "Lime City", Huntington was known for its large number of limestone quarries and kilns, which peaked at 31 in 1885. As shown in the map at the end of this chapter, the bedrock geology of Huntington is exclusively from the Silurian geologic period, part of the Wabash Formation and comprised of limestone, dolomite, and argillaceous dolomite. This mineral combination is highly suitable for supporting buildings and associated infrastructure below the surface of the earth, helping to reduce development and construction costs. Limestone, the primary bedrock material of Huntington, is such an excellent structural support, that it is mined for a number of construction related purposes.

**Floodplain**

As shown in the map at the end of this chapter, the City of Huntington contains numerous regulated floodplains which primarily run east to west, as can be expected in a community that is situated along two river corridors. The most predominate floodplains run along the Wabash River and Little River. Other areas include Flint Creek to the northeast and a narrow band of low-lying land just south of the Little River, which runs from east to west within the City. This area is known as Rabbit Run, a critical component of the stormwater system for the City of Huntington. Almost all of the floodplains within the City are regulated 100-year floodplains. The likelihood of flooding in these areas can be elevated due to increased land development and paving, both of which speed up the rate in which stormwater runs off the land. In periods of time when rivers swell to capacity, water quickly overcomes riverbanks and inundates these low-lying floodplain areas. Floodplains are a critical influencer of land use and development, as they can determine whether a site is suitable for construction or even a particular use. Unmitigated floodplain areas are typically utilized as open space for public use or as scenic conservation areas due to the hazards which restrict their developed use. Properly mitigated development within a floodplain can be achieved, but often comes at a higher construction cost when compared to areas not prone to flooding. The preservation of floodplains and floodways is important to the community as a whole; if these areas are not managed properly, they can increase the risk of flooding on properties which are not normally subject to flooding. As a result of construction prior to floodplain delineation, some structures currently exist within regulated flood hazard areas. The most recent flood maps for the City of Huntington were adopted in 2015, replacing maps previously made effective in 1983.

Through the flood Insurance Act of 1968, Congress established the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP is a federal program which enables property owners in participating communities such as Huntington to purchase insurance as a protection against flood losses in exchange for state and community floodplain management regulations which are designed to reduce future flood damage. If a community adopts and enforces a floodplain management ordinance to reduce flood risk to new construction within floodplains, the Federal Government will make flood insurance available to property owners in the community as a financial protection against flood losses. Additionally, structures built in compliance to NFIP building standards suffer approximately 80% less damage annually than those not built in compliance. Flood insurance is designed to provide an alternative to disaster assistance and to reduce the escalating cost of repairing damage to structures and their contents caused by floods. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) manages the National Flood Insurance Program. The three components of the NFIP program are flood insurance, floodplain management, and flood hazard mapping. In addition to providing flood insurance and reducing flood damage, the NFIP identifies and maps floodplains. Mapping flood hazards creates awareness of those hazards and provides data needed for floodplain management programs and to rate new construction for flood insurance.

**Wetlands**

Wetlands are areas where the nature of soil development and the types of plant and animal communities living in the soil and on its surface are determined by the saturation with water. Wetlands are ecological resources and home to a varying combination of plants and animals. Wetland habitats contain the highest diversity of plants and animals, including endangered species, in Indiana. There are six different classifications that make up wetlands as determined by the Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States. As shown in the map at the end of this chapter, Huntington has several wetland areas located primarily adjacent to the rivers and creeks. In addition to providing ecological benefits, wetlands play a vital role in the stormwater management system of the City of Huntington. Wetlands serve as a natural means for stormwater quality to be improved prior to being deposited into waterways. When wetlands collect stormwater runoff, they hold the water until such time it can be naturally discharged, helping to prevent rivers from rising during heavy rain events and acting as a flood control mechanism which prevents damage to property.



**Waterways**

The main waterways in the City of Huntington are the Wabash River and its tributary, the Little River. These two rivers converge at the “Forks of the Wabash” within the city limits at approximately W. Park Drive and SR 9. In all, the Wabash River is 503 miles long and flows southwest from northwest Ohio to southern Illinois before draining into the Ohio River. The Wabash River flows freely from the dam at J. Edward Roush Lake to its terminus at the Ohio River. A number of creeks and ditches traverse through the City of Huntington, the primary one being Flint Creek. Flint Creek runs from the northeast part of the City to approximately Old US 24, where it then travels underground beneath downtown to the point where it drains into the Little River. Rabbit Run is an open ditch which drains land to the southeast (both within the City and in the County) to the Little River. Several other drains run in other parts of the City, both open and in tile in order to help alleviate drainage problems to protect structures and property from flooding. Huntington County is also home to two large reservoirs which act primarily as flood control to the region. More information on these areas can be found in the Parks and Recreation Chapter of this plan. A complete map of waterways within the City of Huntington is located at the end of this chapter.

**Soils**

According to the USDA soil survey, approximately 29 different soils can be found within the City of Huntington. The soil survey indicates characteristics such as soil type, slope gradient, soil suitability, and soil use limitations. The two most common types of soil within the City are Randolph Loam (RcA) and Blount Silt Loam (BcB2); these two comprise approximately 44% of all soils within the City. The Randolph Loam can primarily be found south of W. Park Drive, while the Blount Silt Loam can be found north of W. Park Drive. The diverse soil types for the City of Huntington are illustrated on the map at the end of this chapter. The Randolph series consists of soils which are moderately deep and drain somewhat poorly. The soil forms in till overlying residuum from limestone or dolostone. They are located on till plains and range in slopes from 0%-6%, although within the City of Huntington, the slopes range from 0%-2%. The Blount series consists of soils which are moderately deep or deep to dense till. They are somewhat poorly drained, slowly permeable soils. They formed in till and are on till planes. They typically have slopes ranging from 0%-6%, although within the City of Huntington, the slopes range from 1%-4% and are eroded. Soils play a large part in determining which uses private property are suitable for and helping to determine the development patterns of the City of Huntington. There are soils which are suitable for agriculture and create nutrient rich farm ground. There are also soils that contain characteristics which make them ideal for supporting structures. When a particular piece of property does not contain suitable soils, a great deal of money may have to be devoted to soil cut and fill activities, which increase construction costs and may hinder economic development.

**Woodlands**

While much of Huntington’s natural vegetation has been cleared for development or agriculture, some woodlands remain along river corridors and within conservation areas. In addition to providing environmental benefits such as a habitat for wildlife and improved air and water quality, woodlands make significant contributions to the visual character of Huntington. A variety of tree species can be found within the City’s jurisdictional area. Some of the more popular tree species include oak, ash, beech, soft maple, sugar tree, walnut, cherry, poplar, and elm. Woodland buffers are found along portions of the Wabash River and Little River. These buffers are extremely important for providing wildlife habitat, filtering sediment from stormwater, and moderating water temperatures. Scattered woodlands are found throughout the City’s jurisdictional area. These are typically wet areas that were not drained for farming because of seasonal ponding. Often developers find these to be attractive sites for homebuilding, but building within them can irreparably damage the natural ecosystem. As shown in the map at the end of this chapter, open water and wooded areas are classified into different types as classified by National Land Cover Data. These are areas characterized by tree cover; tree canopy accounts for 25-100 percent of the cover with the last 2 classifications considered more as wetlands. The five different classifications of woodlands are deciduous forest, evergreen forest, mixed forest, woody wetlands, and emergent herbaceous wetlands.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. The City of Huntington should identify and implement ways in which further public education about stormwater management could be carried out.
2. The City of Huntington should act as a role model for environmental stewardship by embracing, promoting, and implementing environmentally sound construction, development, and land use practices on behalf of the public; which can help to lower the operating costs of public buildings and services.
3. Current development standards should be evaluated in order to ensure that alternative surface treatments, environmentally sensitive designs, and reduced parking requirements are permissible in order to decrease dependence on the current stormwater system and potentially eliminate the need for costly upgrades and expansions. An incentive based approach to this strategy may be the most appropriate in order to gain traction in public utilization.
4. Developments should avoid negatively impacting or reducing wetlands when designing sites and buildings. Whenever feasible, wetlands should be conserved; when wetlands are eliminated, it should be done in a manner consistent with an approved wetland mitigation plan. As a general policy, the City will strongly stress the avoidance of wetland areas for development.
5. The City of Huntington should encourage the development and replanting of tree-lined streets, expand its role in the Tree City USA program, and promote the reforestation of City property where appropriate in order to promote urban forestry and improve the health and aesthetic qualities of the community.
6. The City of Huntington's development process currently does not address the location, conservation, or mitigation of species habitats. Species habitat protection should be considered an integral part of open space preservation.

## D. Historic Preservation

### • Issues and Findings

Historic preservation helps to make the community a beautiful and desirable place to live, work, and visit. The architecture, scale, and unique characteristics of the City's old buildings appeal to a wide variety of people. The future of the City is dependent upon its ability to successfully revitalize older residential areas and the downtown, thereby capitalizing on the unique historic aspects which currently exist. Unfortunately, some public policies, economic decline, and socio-economic factors have threatened the livability and sense of place that makes many of Huntington's older neighborhoods unique. The following list outlines several key historic preservation issues facing Huntington, as well as some possible solutions:

- Economic revitalization must be encouraged by developing resources that address specific problems currently facing the historic heritage of Huntington.
- Preservation of the existing housing stock is a key element in solving the demand for urban sprawl, providing better places to live, and creating lively communities. It takes advantage of existing resources, makes financial sense from a construction cost perspective, prevents further sprawl, preserves open space, helps to keep industries vital and attractive, utilizes existing infrastructure, and protects the important structures and places which tell the history of Huntington.
- Through the implementation of revised development standards and incentivizing the development process, Huntington can reuse existing buildings, protect the historic downtown and neighborhoods, preserve farmland, maintain character, and promote a sense of place. Sprawl has long drained the vitality of downtown and many historic neighborhoods, leaving structures vulnerable to underuse, neglect, and demolition. When left unchecked, sprawl eliminates alternative transportation choices and creates pressure to widen roads and other infrastructure.
- Understanding the impacts of transportation and land use decisions can help elected officials and planners to protect historic sites and landscapes.

#### The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is an official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historical and archeological resources. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Additional qualification criteria include elements which are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; those which are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or those that have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.



### Huntington's National Register Districts

Huntington is home to seven National Register Historic Districts. These honorary districts can be found scattered around the central and western parts of the City. A map of the districts listed below can be found at the end of this chapter.

- Drover Town Historic District
- Hawley Heights Historic District
- Huntington Courthouse Square Historic District
- Memorial Park
- North Jefferson Street Historic District
- Old Plat Historic District
- Victory Noll - St. Felix Friary Historic District

### Huntington's National Register Single Sites

The David Alonzo and Elizabeth Purviance House, located at 809 N. Jefferson Street, was constructed in 1892 for one of Huntington's pioneer businessmen, is architecturally significant for its distinctive blend of the Chateausque and Victorian Romanesque styles. The vertical and substantial massing, the steeply pitched hip and conical roof, decorative dormers, tall corbelled chimneys, and cylindrical or polygonal towers are key features of the Chateausque style. A mixture of decorative elements, also characteristic of this style, include ogee arch hoodmold with nautilus shell crown above the second-story windows. The polychrome and multi-textured effect of the red brick, rock-faced limestone, imbricated slate, and pressed metal decoration is indicative of the Victorian Romanesque style and includes the use of semicircular arches, short columns with foliated capitals, and a variety of window shapes and sizes. The exotic interiors, typical of late Victorian architectural styles, are also significant and include Classical and Moorish details, among others. The structure is currently a private residence.



The German Reformed Church, located at 206 Etna Avenue, was designed by Huntington native William A. Stevens, an 1890 graduate of Cornell University and architect for two prestigious Chicago firms, this building, constructed in 1904, is important for its turn of the century eclecticism, employing Eastlake, Richardsonian Romanesque, and Tudor Revival elements. However, its primary significance comes from its association with Henry Drover, the leading founder of the German Reformed congregation. Drover, a Prussian immigrant and captain of his own canal boat fleet, arrived in Huntington in 1856 and purchased 160 acres of woodland on the south bank of the Little River across from Huntington, a portion of which he donated for the German Reformed Church. The church remains the key institutional building associated with the origins of this almost entirely residential area. Presently, the building is home to St. Peter's First Community Church, one of Huntington's oldest and continually operating religious institutions.





The Hotel LaFontaine, located at 208 W. State Street, was once a prestigious hotel designed by local architect Robert W. Stevens and constructed in 1925. One of the only major hotels in Huntington at the time, the Hotel LaFontaine is significant for its architecture, interior embellishments, and construction methods, as well as for its distinction as a commercial and social center. Its understated exterior, accented with Colonial Revival entablature, multi-pane windows, and shell and scroll coping, belies its opulent interior. Unseen, its innovative construction methods include steel joists, a “dead level” roof and skeletal structure designed to carry additional floors, and six-ton steel girders spanning above the swimming pool. As a commercial and social center, it once housed the Chamber of Commerce, hosted many famous guests, and was the setting for special occasions for local residents. Today the former hotel is home to the LaFontaine Center, a senior living facility. Although some of the rare amenities of the hotel, such as its decorative pool, no longer exist, it serves as a rich historic setting in which hotel rooms have been converted into apartment units.



The Moore/Corlew Block, located at 400 N. Jefferson Street, was originally constructed in 1845 by local builder John Kenower as a dry goods store for Samuel Moore, this small block building is significant for its age and architectural merit, being the first example of brick construction in Huntington. George R. Corlew owned the building in 1869 and constructed an addition to the structure which brought it to its present configuration. With its unique details, such as wood lintels and sills and six-over-six windows, it is downtown’s only example of early Federal style architecture. Further significance of the site is derived from its association with both John Kenower and Samuel Moore, whose families were among the first to settle in Huntington County and who subsequently played an important role in the early development of the City of Huntington. Presently, the historic Moore/Corlew Block building is in operation as an optometrist’s office.



The Samuel Purviance House, located at 326 S. Jefferson Street, is both a Local Single Site and National Register Site. Built in 1859, it is significant for its architectural merit and for its association with Samuel Purviance, a local businessman, the founder and president of the First National Bank of Huntington, and a civic leader elected as County Commissioner in 1842 and as County Clerk in 1854. The low-pitched roof, wide eaves supported by modillions, quoining, hoodmold window lintels, sills with corbelled supports, and elaborate portico are typical features of the Italianate or Italian-derived styles of the architecture. Other elements, such as the trabeated doorway and dentilled frieze, recall the Greek Revival style. In the 1920's, the house operated for a time as the Purviance Funeral Home and then remained in the possession of the Purviance family descendants until it was sold in 1960. Since that time, the home has been utilized for a number of commercial ventures, most recently as a combination bed and breakfast and private residence.



Sunken Gardens, located on W. Park Drive, was constructed between 1923 and 1929 is significant as a designed landscape uniquely intended to reclaim an abandoned limestone quarry. Subsequently promoted as a tourist attraction, the gardens also represent an early use of landscape design to attract passing motorists to local attractions. Based on the picturesque theory of landscape architecture, the Chicago Landscape Company architects Blarney and Rary, created a naturalistic and informal setting with various plantings, footbridges, fountains, fieldstone staircases, and a pool-ringed peninsula. The most notable feature of the gardens is the W. Park Drive Bridge. With ten-foot corner pillars and fieldstone construction, it carries a two-lane roadway, once divided by a low, pillared wall over the main entrance to the gardens. Seasonally decorated for tourists, it is home to Huntington's annual Christmas display. This location has seen a number of renovations in recent years, most of which have repaired and rebuilt the decorative stone and limestone walls.



The Taylor-Zent House, located at 715 N. Jefferson Street, was designed by the Chicago architect, T.J. Long and constructed between 1896 and 1898 by local builder D.D. Whitelock, the Taylor-Zent house is primarily significant for its association with Enos T. Taylor, a self-made businessman and banker who rose from modest beginnings to financial and social prominence, contributing greatly to Huntington County's commercial growth and development. The building is also significant as a prime example of Victorian Romanesque and Chateausque architecture. Elements of the Victorian Romanesque style include monochrome brick walls highlighted by round-arched windows and door openings, mismatched towers, pronounced archivolt trim, short columns with foliated capitals, steeply pitched gable dormers, and an assortment of window shapes and sizes. The steeply pitched hip and conical roof, tall corbelled chimney, and cylindrical towers are more indicative of the Chateausque style. The structure has historically been used as a funeral home since its time as a private residence.



The William Street/Horace Mann School, located at 521 William Street, is a blend of Victorian Romanesque and Queen Anne architecture. This former elementary school's most unique feature is its bell tower, which is round below and octagonal above the roofline. Other features include the polychromatic wall surface, the semicircular arch entrance, and the arcade of the belfry are characteristics of the Victorian Romanesque style. Queen Anne elements include the irregular massing, the projecting pavilions, and a multi-gabled roof with pedimented dormers. The building is also significant as once being the oldest existent school in Huntington, constructed on land donated in 1860 by Henry Drover. The third school at this location, the present building, originally known as the William Street School, was designed by A.D. Mohler and built in 1895. Between 1917 and 1918, the school's curriculum included drafting male students into the Student Army Training Corps to provide them with military training. It may also have provided elementary school units. If so, the William Street School may have uniquely enacted this provision. In 1926, the school was renamed the Horace Mann School after eight classrooms and a gymnasium, then atypical for grade schools, were added.



### **Huntington's Local Historic Districts**

Huntington is home to one locally designated historic district. As shown in the map at the end of this chapter, the Drover Town Historic District consists of eleven properties scattered along Henry and Jefferson Streets. Together, each of these locations comprise this designated multi-property district. Included within this district is the Samuel Purviance House, the only property within the City of Huntington to be designated as a National Register Single Site, Local Single Site, and located within both a National Register and Local Historic District.



### Huntington's Local Single Sites

Fourteen properties within the City of Huntington are designated as Local Single Sites. These site designations come complete with preservation guidelines to ensure that the structures retain their historical significance. The Historic Review Board oversees adherence to the guidelines and the designation of local single sites. As shown in the map at the end of this chapter, the properties are located across the central part of the City of Huntington.

• <i>Unamed</i>	426/428 W. Park Drive	Local Site
• A.C. & Margaret Beeson House	1118 Warren Street	Local Site
• Beaver-King House	541 Byron Street	Local Site
• Clarence & Beatrix Juillerat House	868 William Street	Local Site
• Frank and Catherine Book House	1070 Warren Street	Local Site
• Humbert House	337 E. Market Street	Local Site
• Kindler House	954 Poplar Street	Local Site
• LaMont-Runyan House	550 E. State Street	Local Site
• Lewis Block Building	401-413 N. Jefferson Street	Local Site
• McLin's Jefferson Street Covered Bridge Houses	664, 668, 670, 674 E. Market St.	Local Site
• Neuer House	1013 Poplar Street	Local Site
• Samuel Purviance House	326 S. Jefferson Street	Local & National Site
• UB-IOOF Block	48 E. Franklin Street	Local Site
• Young House	551-553 W. Park Drive	Local Site

### The National Trust for Historic Preservation

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to saving historic places and revitalizing America's communities. A recipient of the National Humanities Medal, the Trust was founded in 1949 and provides leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to protect the irreplaceable places that tell America's story. Staff at the Washington, D.C. headquarters, six regional offices and 28 historic sites work with the Trust's 270,000 members and thousands of preservation groups in all 50 states. The National Trust offers many programs and educational opportunities in historic preservation, the most relevant being preservation grants, heritage tourism programs, and state and local partnership programs.

### Indiana Historical Society

Since 1830, the Indiana Historical Society has been connecting people to the past by collecting, preserving, interpreting and disseminating Indiana history. The independent, non-profit organization also publishes books and periodicals; sponsors teacher workshops; provides youth, adult and family programming; assists local historical groups throughout the state; and maintains one of the largest collections of material on the history of Indiana and the Old Northwest. The Indiana Historical Society is one of the oldest historical societies in the United States, and one of the largest with more than 10,000 members. The Society opened a new 165,000 sq. ft. headquarters in downtown Indianapolis in July, 1999.

### Indiana Landmarks

Once established by volunteers, Indiana Landmarks now ranks as the largest private statewide preservation group in the United States, with an Indianapolis headquarters and nine regional offices staffed by professionals who help save and restore Indiana's old buildings. The Foundation promotes preservation and education about the techniques and benefits of saving and restoring historic places through tours, publications, meetings and workshops. In addition, the foundation provides assistance in forming local preservation groups and may provide grants and loans to aid with specific preservation efforts.

**Huntington County Historical Society Museum**

Organized in 1925 and incorporated in 1985, the Historical Museum offers a unique look at the history of Huntington County. Its convenient downtown location allows visitors to trace the history of Huntington from its roots with Miami Indians and French settlers to present day. Currently, the museum hosts over 400 students each year, in addition to a number of general public visitors. In 1999, the museum was relocated from the fourth floor of the Courthouse to its present location. The 8,000 square foot facility features a variety of exhibits focused on nearly every era of local history. Historical Society memberships are available to the general public and the museum features a gift shop.

**Huntington Alert**

Huntington Alert, Inc. is a 501-c non-profit organization dedicated to promoting historic preservation awareness in Huntington County. The membership organization actively preserves historic properties through acquisition/ resale and hosts community events which helps to educate citizens about historical elements within the community in order to raise awareness about preservation related issues.

**City of Huntington Historic Review Board**

The City of Huntington is fortunate enough to have a Historic Review Board that makes decisions on a number of preservation related issues. The board provides public oversight in the creation of various historic districts, site designations, grant opportunities, and preservation guidelines. The seven member public board focuses on development, redevelopment, rehabilitation, and preservation issues which impact the visual and historical qualities of Huntington's historical districts and sites. The board operates under the authority of Chapter 153 of the City of Huntington Code of Ordinances, Historic Districts.

**• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. The City of Huntington will utilize its Historic Review Board as a city-wide preservation agency. As such, it should continue to identify and preserve historic properties, review development and demolition activities which may impact historic value, and provide public information and assistance about preservation.
2. The preservation of Huntington's historic districts is dependent upon its ability to continue to inventory historic sites, buildings, and related resources; implement design review guidelines for historic districts and properties; identify, preserve and use historic resources for future generations; and increase public awareness about the opportunities and benefits of being designated as a district or site.
3. Pursue the incremental designation of new local historic districts, utilizing the new districts as a way to demonstrate the economic, aesthetic, and historic benefits that coincide with such designation.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of offering residential property tax abatements for the improvement of historically significant homes as a means of encouraging preservation and expanding the existing tax base.



## E. Environmental Protection

### • Issues and Findings

Sustainable development cannot be achieved unless jobs are environmentally clean, in that they do not contribute to air or water pollution or create toxic byproducts. Ecological integrity helps to ensure that every person enjoys the cumulative benefits of clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment at home and work. As the growth and development patterns of Huntington move further towards, and beyond the urban fringe, it begins to compete with open space, habitat, and prime farmland. The loss of open space can impact the environment in a number of ways. Natural landscape features and wildlife habitats become threatened; stormwater runoff becomes more prevalent and directly flows into tributaries without being naturally filtered; the loss of farmland hastens the use of lesser quality soils for crop production, thereby heightening the conversion of woodlands and wetlands for agricultural purposes and increasing dependency on irrigation, fertilizers, and chemicals. As older land uses become obsolete due to economic and market factors, their once prime real estate can become a public hazard if sound environmental practices are not followed. If such dangerous practices take place, they can have disastrous impacts on the community as a whole by lowering property values, contaminating natural resources, and costing governmental units and the public in addressing their environmental liabilities.

#### **Brownfields**

With certain legal exclusions and additions, the term Brownfield means any real property, in which its expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressures off greenspaces and working lands. In 2015 the City of Huntington was awarded a \$350,000 U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant. Through that grant, the City has been able to assess 9 suspected Brownfield sites to date. Alongside that grant, the most problematic Brownfield site in the City, the former H.K. Porter/Friction Material facility, received some much needed attention after nearly 15 years of sitting idle and continuing to be a drain on City resources, the tax base and quality of life for nearby residents and the community as a whole.

Residents and businesses alike recognize this location as a serious environmental and blight liability for the City of Huntington. Past activities at this site include the manufacturing of automotive brakes, which contained asbestos. Since being abandoned, the property was known to have uncontrolled hazardous materials present in multiple locations on site. The City has continued to cite incidents of vandalism, despite constant efforts to secure the site. The site occupies approximately 11.5 acres of land and is bordered by residential areas to the east and west, by railroad tracks and residential areas to the south, and by residential areas and a former elementary school (now a church) to the north. Acquired by the City in 2014 due to back taxes, the former asbestos containing automotive parts manufacturing facility closed in 1999, leaving behind elevated levels of asbestos, lead, benzene and other contaminants throughout the site, in the soil and in the groundwater.



*The H.K. Porter Facility on Sabine Street*

In 2015 the U.S. EPA Emergency Response Branch began action at the site, characterizing and disposing of hazardous materials on-site while preparing to test adjacent residential properties for contamination. To date, much has been accomplished at the site thanks to federal cleanup spending exceeding \$900,000. However much more remains to be completed, including the demolition of the remaining buildings and evaluation of future uses for the site. Cleanup of this site would not be possible without the assistance of the U.S. EPA and given the City's limited financial resources, their assistance will be required in the future. The City is committed to the cleanup and elimination of this contaminated eyesore.

#### **Industrial Pretreatment**

Industrial wastes can damage sewers infrastructure and interfere with the operation of sewer treatment plants. If allowed to pass through a municipal sewer system untreated, this waste can contaminate nearby water bodies and increase the costs and environmental risks of sludge treatment and disposal. The City of Huntington, through its Water Pollution Control Department, administers an industrial pretreatment program which allows pretreated waste water to enter into the municipal waste water system through a permit program approved by IDEM and the U.S. EPA. The program represents a partnership between the City and its industries which allow potential pollutants to be identified and mitigated through sound environmental processes in order to protect public health.

#### **Huntington County Solid Waste Management District**

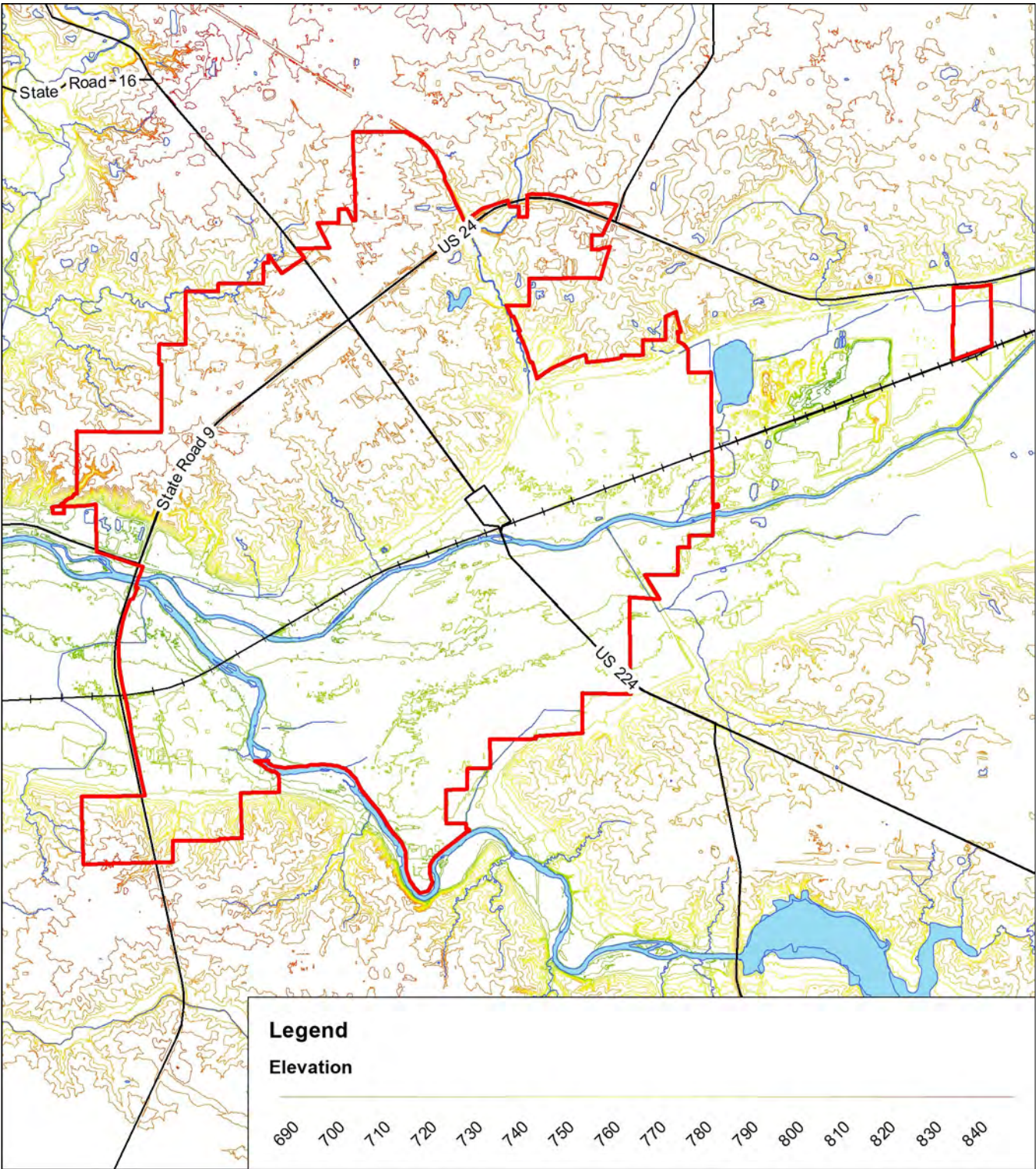
The goal of the Huntington County Solid Waste Management District (SWMD) is to implement and maintain source reduction, reuse, and recycling programs that reduce the amount of solid waste being disposed in local landfills. It also works to ensure that the disposal capacity for the remaining solid waste generated within the district is provided for over the course of the next 20 years. The SWMD provides unstaffed drop-off recycling centers, weekly household hazardous waste and electronics collection, and pre-approved hazardous waste collection by appointment. The district recently implemented secure drop-off locations for pharmaceutical waste, such as unwanted or expired medication and hosts regular waste collection events for the general public. The SWMD operates a permanent facility at the City Landfill to collect residential hazardous materials such as electronics and chemicals in order to ensure that these items are disposed of properly.

#### **• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Continue to work with appropriate state and federal agencies in order to adequately address the environmental concerns present at the former H.K Porter/Friction Materials property. Grants and other assistance should be sought for the clean-up and redevelopment of this environmentally hazardous property. Furthermore, additional precautions should be taken in order to prevent this type of situation from occurring in the future elsewhere within the City of Huntington.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of incorporating basic environmental standards into various City of Huntington regulatory land use documents in order to provide for more accountable environmental protections.

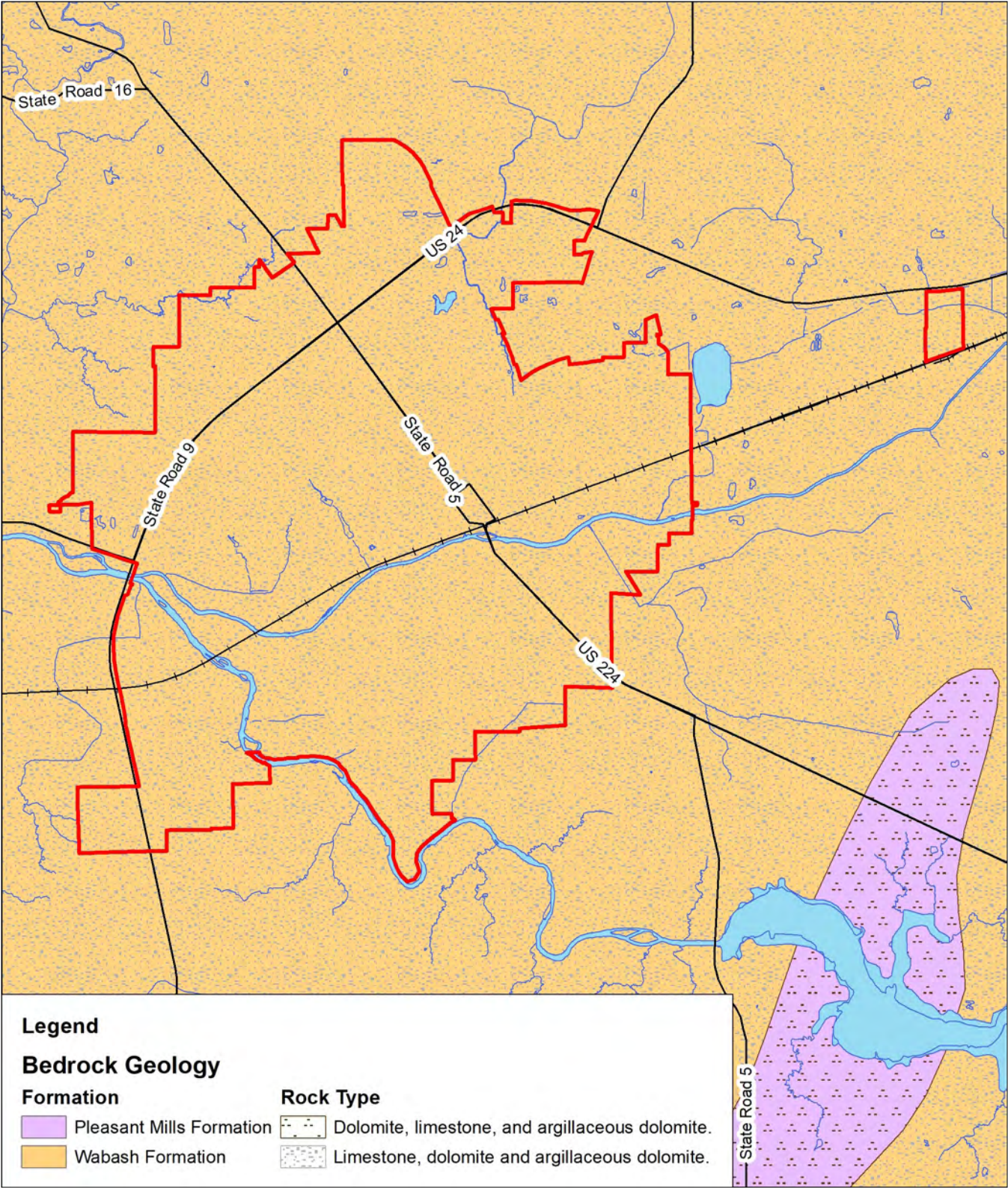


F. Sustainability and Preservation Maps



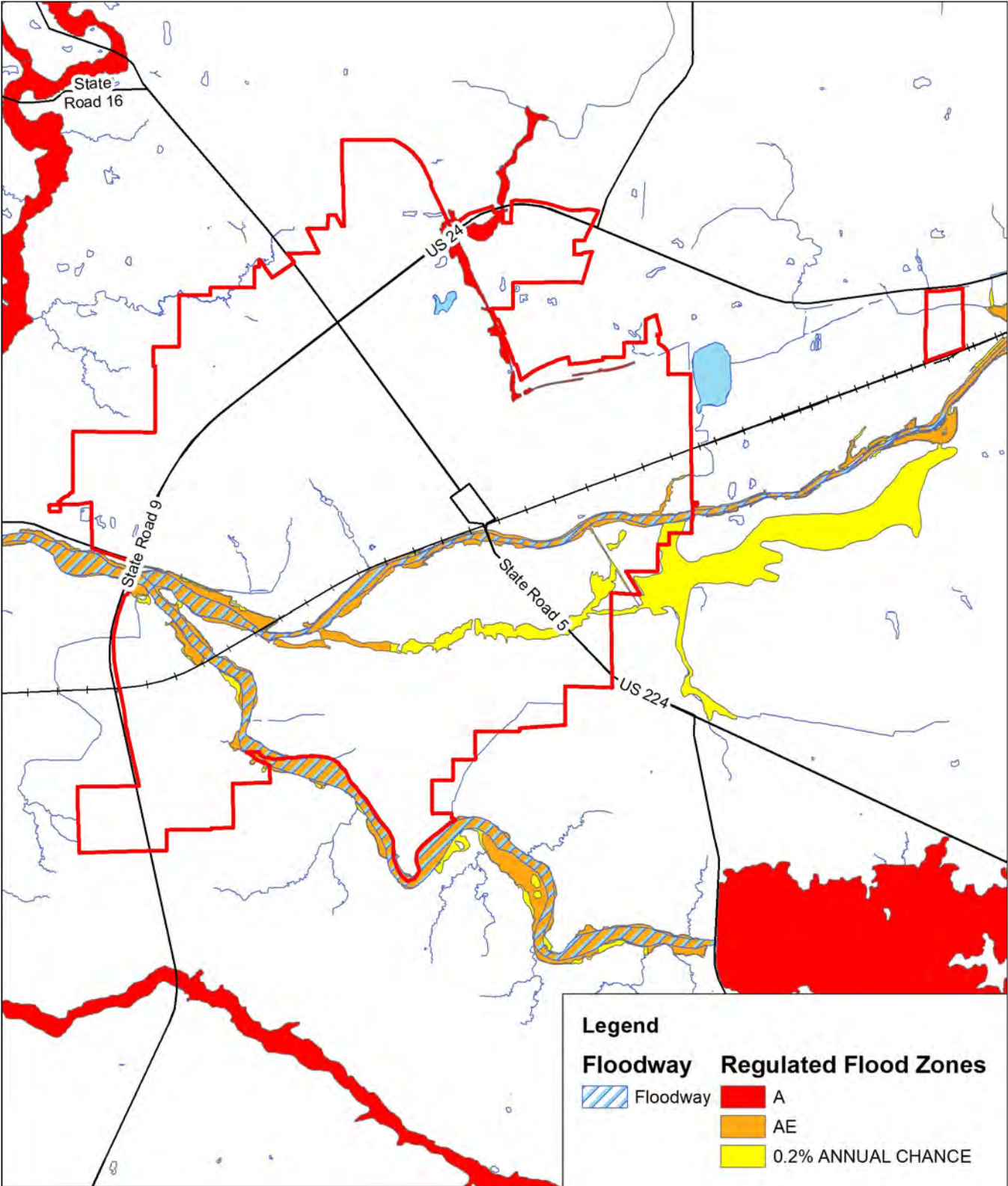
10' Elevation Contours, Source: US Geological Survey (USGS)



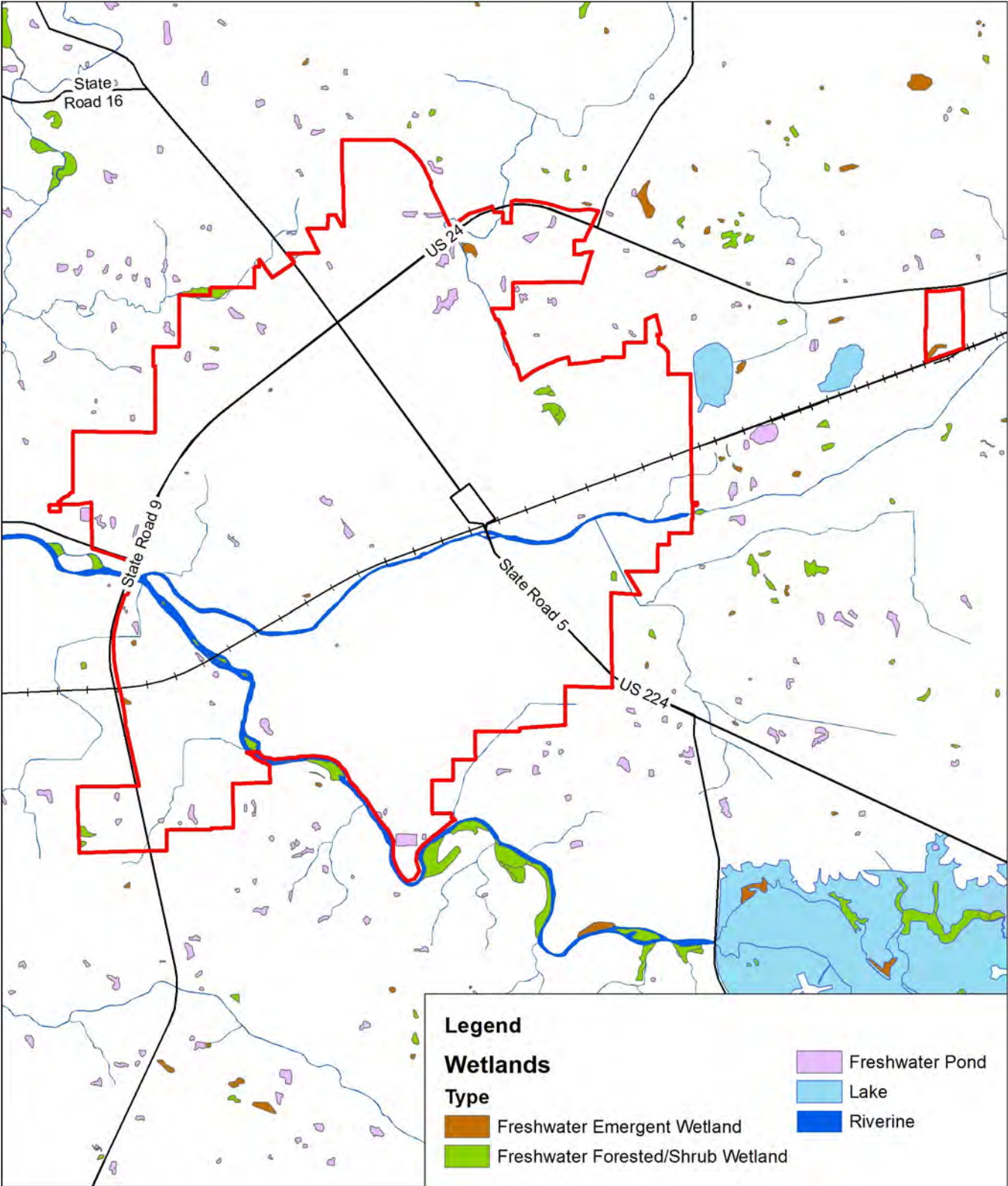


Geology Bedrock Type, Source: Indiana Geological Survey



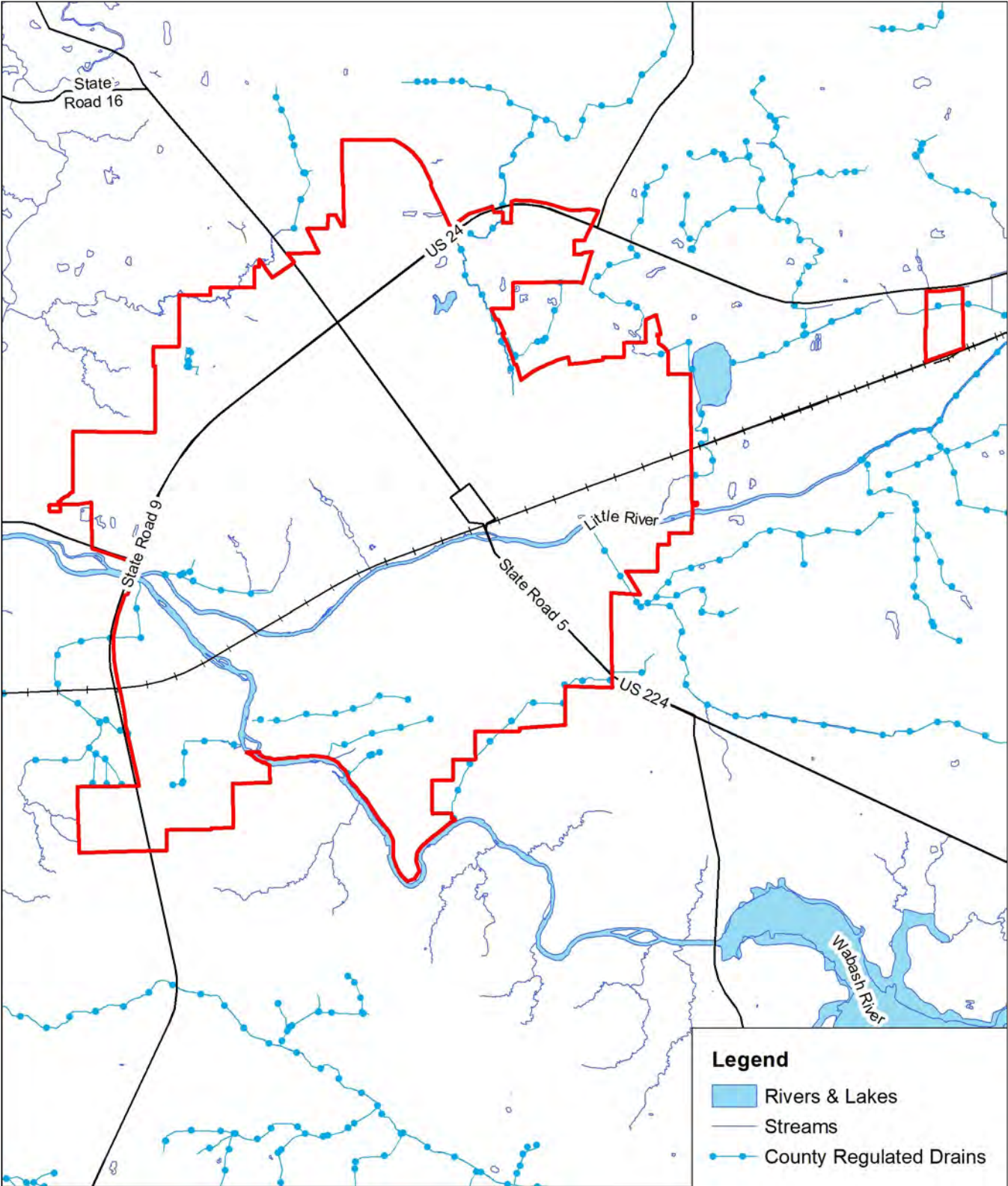


Flood Zones, Floodway, Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)



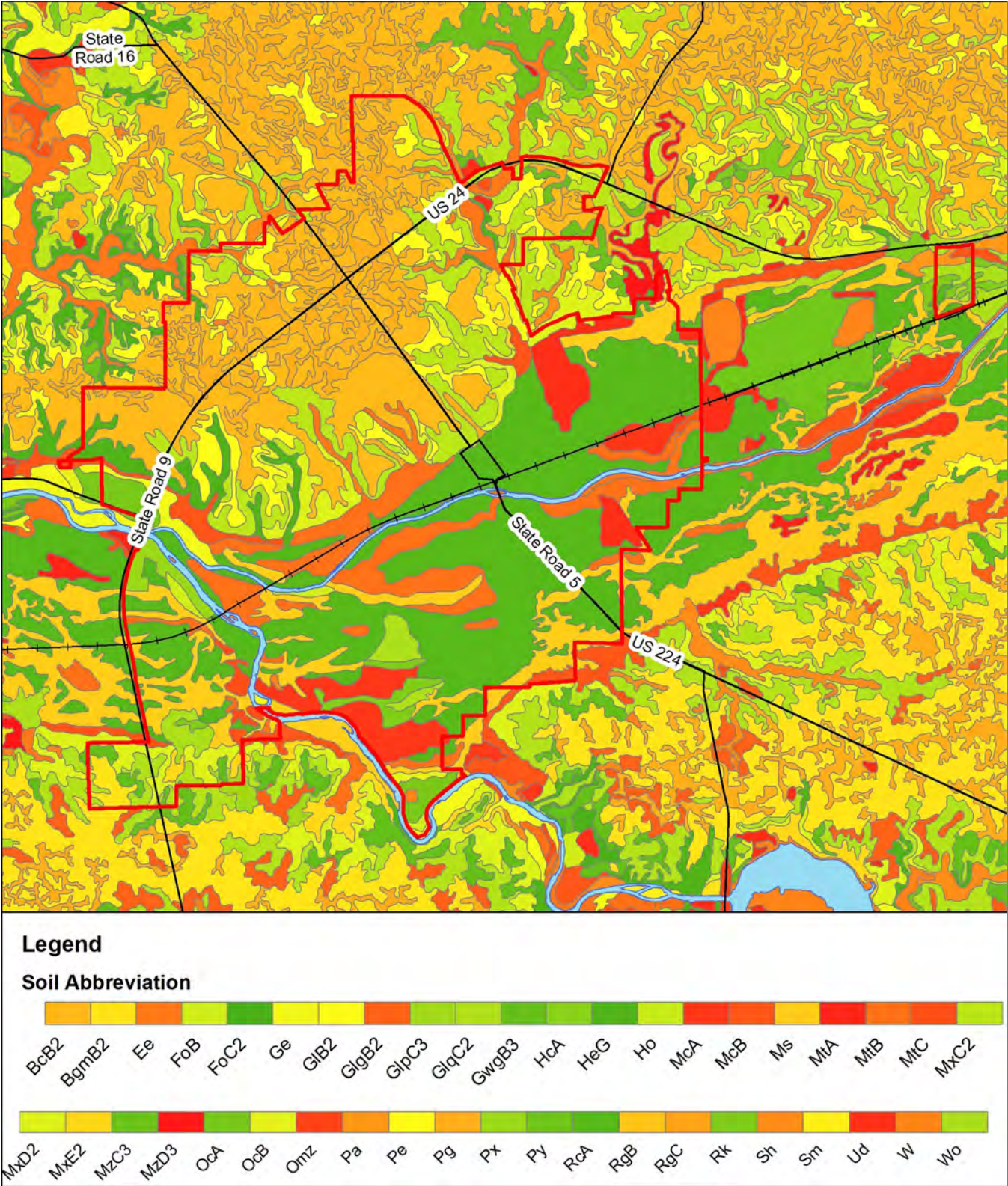
National Wetland Inventory, Source: US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)





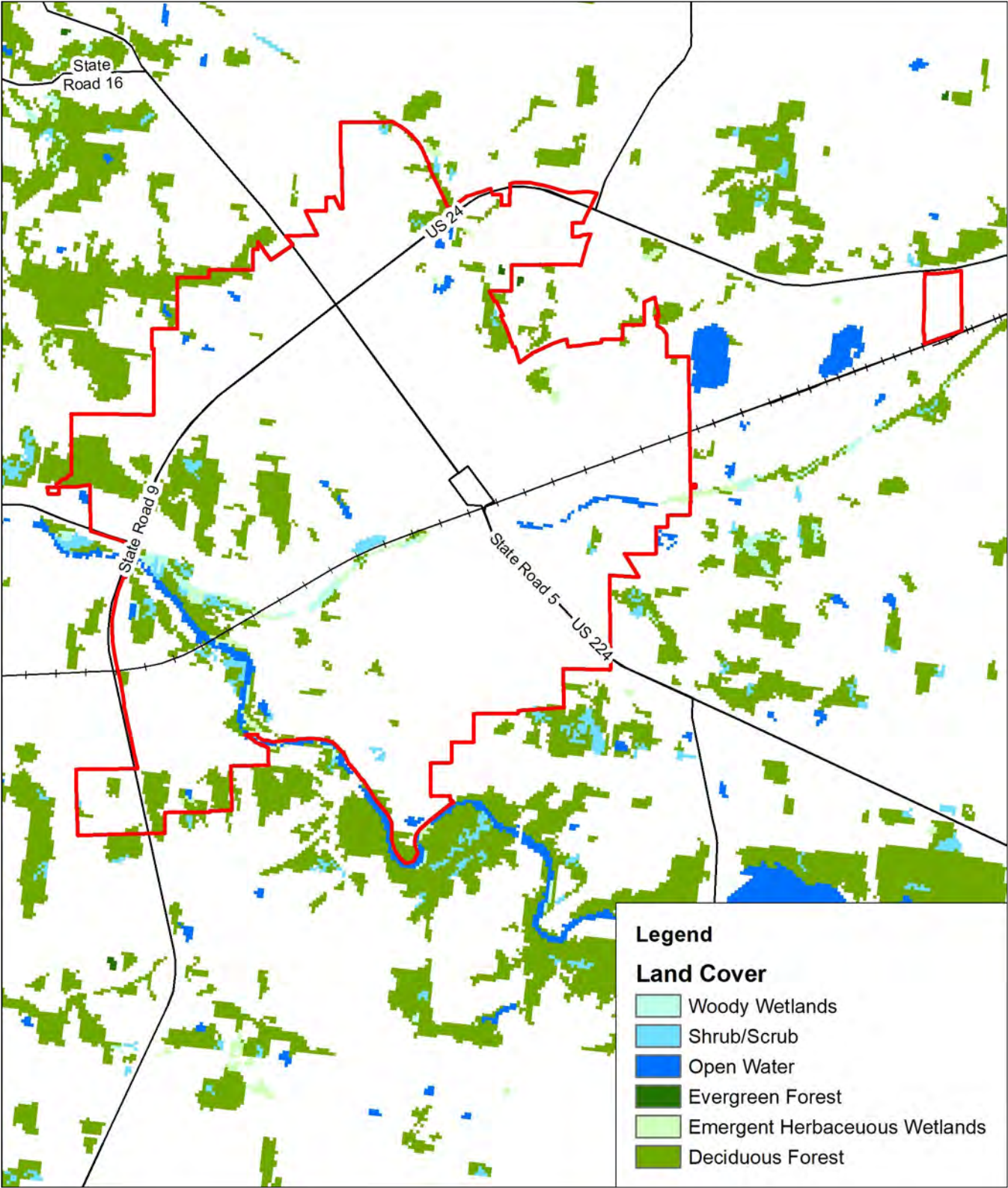
Waterways Including Rivers and Regulated Drains, Source: National Hydrography Dataset & Huntington County Surveyor



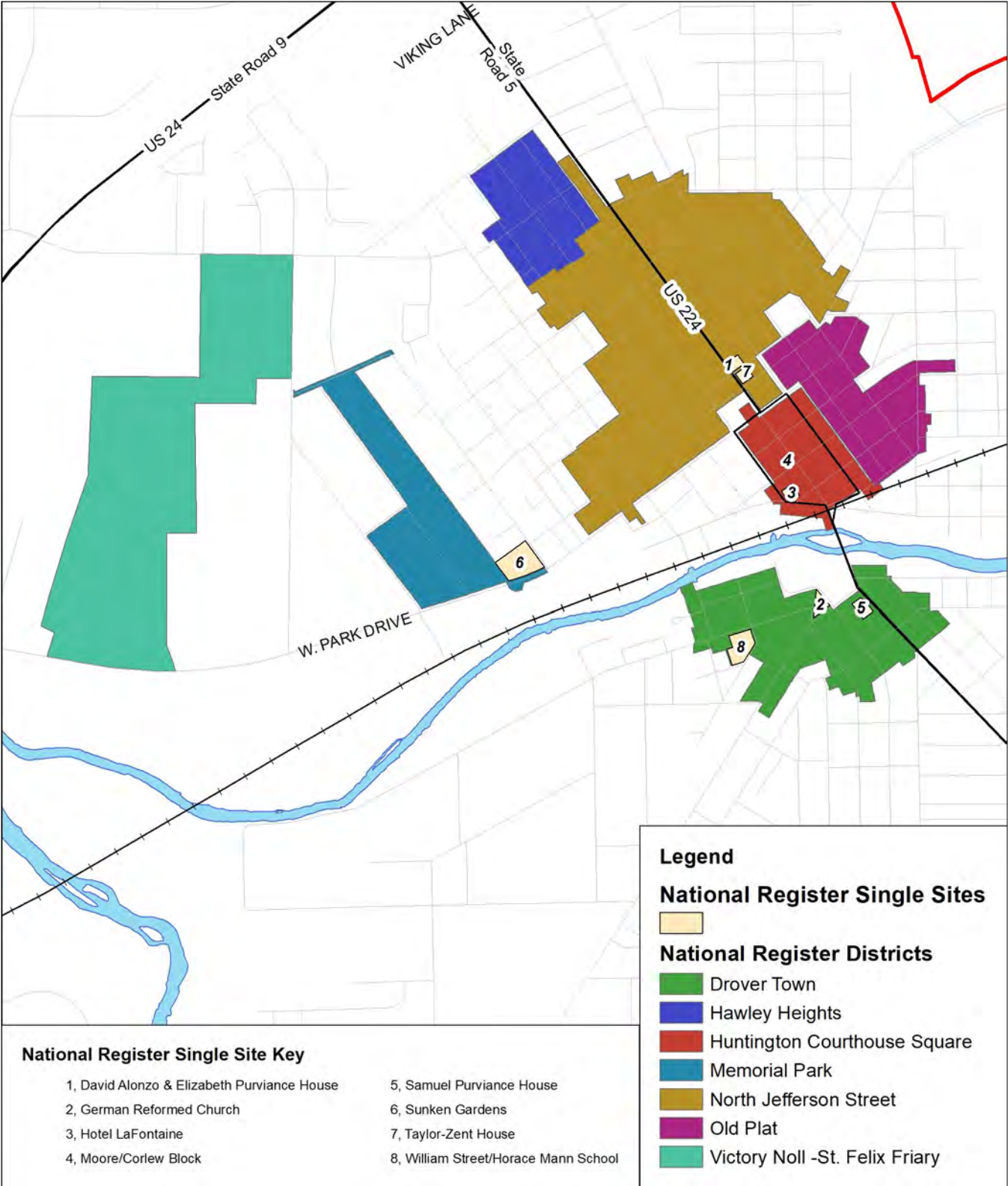


Soil Survey Map, Source: US Department of Agriculture (USDA)



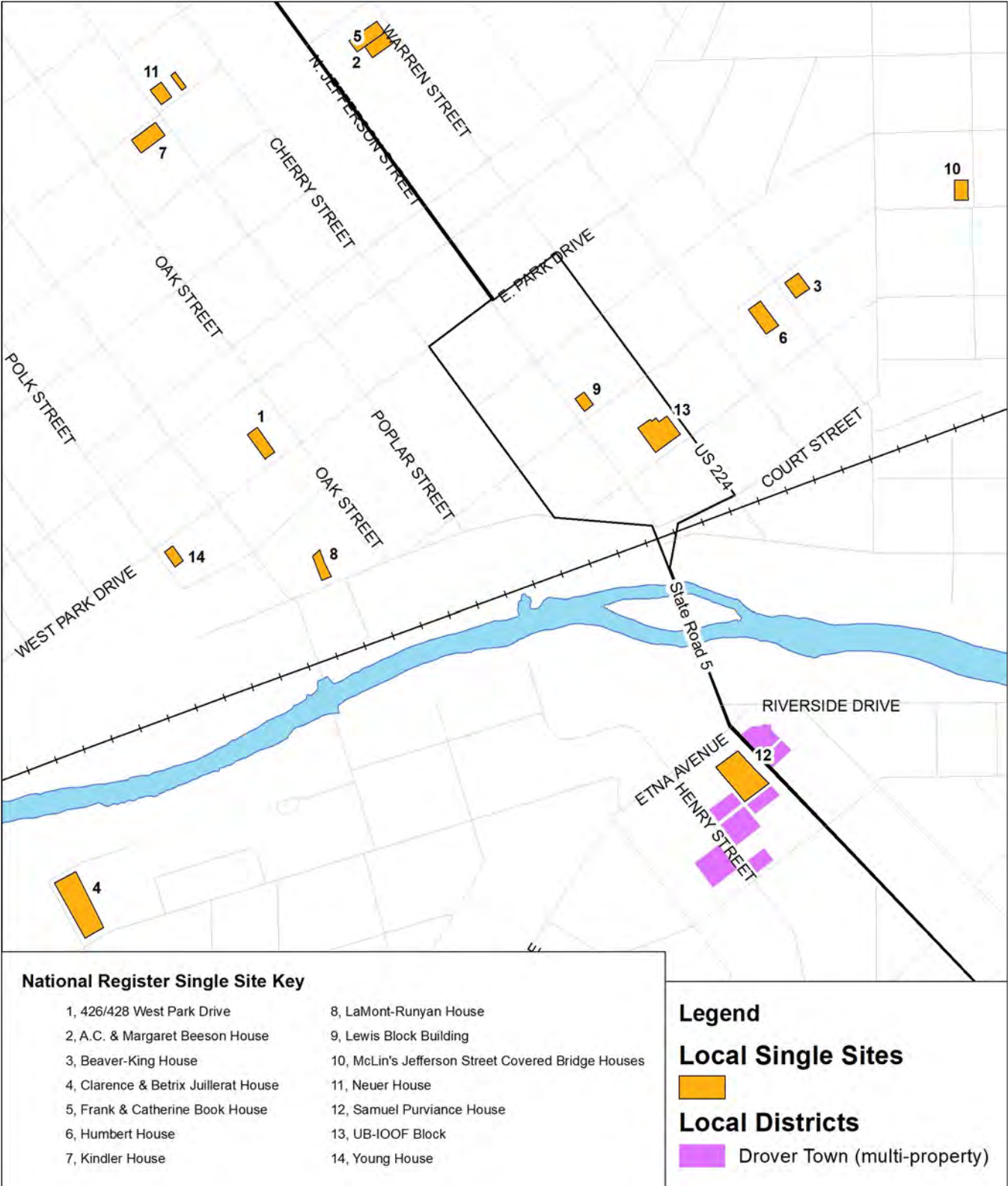


2001 Land Cover Map denoting woodlands & water, Source: US Geological Survey (USGS)



A map showing National Register Districts and National Register Single Sites, Source: National Park Service (NPS)





A map showing Local Historic Districts and Local Single Sites, Source: City of Huntington Historic Review Board



### XIII. LAND USE

*“For every site there is an ideal use. For every use there is an ideal site.”*

*-John Ormsbee Simonds-*





## **A. Introduction**

The City of Huntington crafts land use plans in order to establish a vision for the future of the community as it grows. New development is an asset only when it contributes to, rather than detracts from, the welfare of the community. City officials utilize land use plans when making decisions which allow for desirable patterns of development to be established. An existing land use map is utilized to diagram the different ways in which land is currently being used in the City. The future land use map, which is created as part of a Comprehensive Plan, illustrates the different ways in which land may be ideally utilized in order to meet the needs of the community. City officials use these land use maps as a visual reference when making responsible decisions about future development within the community.

The future land use map divides the community, property by property, into different land use types, with each type representing a specific land use. There are different classifications for each general category of use, with guidelines for what are acceptable uses. All new development or changes in use must be compatible with the future land use classification in which it is designated. Furthermore, requests for rezoning or variances of use must also be compatible with future land use maps and the Comprehensive Plan in general, as to not substantially interfere with the goals and overall vision of the plan. The City utilizes zoning as a means of enforcement in order to protect the assets and character of the community. Land use plans are created to guide zoning and not vice versa.

This chapter defines and explains each of the land use designations in the Existing Land Use Map and identifies the definition and characteristics of each designation. The emphasis of this chapter is to define the form, function, and types of development that is permissible for each land use classification. The chapter also provides recommendations for locating/siting new land use elements and their ancillary components.

### **Land Use Plan**

A land use plan presents policies regarding the extent, intensity, and type of physical development. It typically includes an analysis of existing land use patterns by category of use, an examination of the amount of vacant or open land, and the percentage of each land use that makes up the composition of the community. A future land use plan and map represents the direction of growth and the expected type of uses. The rationale for land use planning includes the following:

- Accommodate future needs
- Provide for orderly growth and development
- Provide sound basis for short and long-range decisions
- Provide an official policy statement for land use development

The adoption of a land use plan as part of the planning process enables a balanced and comprehensive review of zoning amendments. Successful implementation of the goals and objectives of the plan requires regular re-evaluation of strategies and recommendations. This ongoing planning approach is essential to assure that appropriate flexibility exists, since it is impossible to determine the exact location of all land uses in advance of both need and development.

## **B. Goals and Objectives**

### **• Goals**

1. Encourage a variety of land uses coordinated in geographic locations in order to meet the needs of a diverse community which contains thriving neighborhoods, business areas, employment centers, and civic places that provide an opportunity for a wholesome life within a dynamic environment for residents.

### **• Objectives**

1. Coordinate a harmonious balance of land uses throughout the city and its jurisdictional area in order to promote a vibrant and diverse community.
2. Develop opportunities for and support economic development driven land uses which build the tax base.
3. Promote the design of new neighborhoods which match the existing urban fabric where appropriate.
4. Promote the preservation of open space and the incorporation of green space into all land uses.
5. Conserve existing natural resources and integrate natural resources into adjacent developments to minimize negative impacts in order to provide for a healthy ecosystem.
6. Develop and connect pedestrian, bicycle, and other alternative transportation modes to the existing transportation network where appropriate.
7. Support land uses which promote the expansion of educational and institutional facilities where appropriate and in a manner which accentuates the underlying tax base and existing land uses.
8. Support and promote agricultural uses and appropriate limited residential uses within those agricultural areas.
9. Encourage development patterns which offer the efficiencies of density and a mixture of uses including single-family development and appropriate commercial areas.
10. Integrate a mixture of people and housing options in neighborhoods and encourage redevelopment in older areas which are consistent with the existing built environment.
11. Encourage inward redevelopment and reinvestment of the older areas of the city as sprawl continues to apply outward growth pressures.
12. Promote the integration of landscape buffers in new development plans to separate incompatible uses and provide an aesthetic transition between commercial, industrial, and residential uses.
13. Apply design standards to new multi-family residential developments within established neighborhoods to ensure that the urban fabric and pattern of the established neighborhoods are maintained.
14. Develop land use districts or overlay zoning to better coordinate and transitional between land uses.

15. Emphasize downtown as the government, cultural, and business center; and as the preferred location for mixed use developments which include a dense residential component.
16. Encourage infill development strategies wherever possible in a way that minimizes sprawl, promotes mixed use development, and creates public spaces.
17. Study zoning and land uses along major corridors in order to determine if appropriate opportunities for adaptive reuse and redevelopment exist.
18. Revisit and update zoning and subdivision controls in a manner which encourages coordinated development.



## C. Existing Land Use

### • Issues and Findings

For the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan, the entire corporate limits of the City of Huntington were analyzed in detail and assigned existing land use classification. A map depicting the existing land uses of the City of Huntington, which corresponds with the narrative in this subchapter, can be found at the end of this chapter. The different land use categories shown on the map were developed as a standard to organize and define the diverse number of land uses which currently exist within the City of Huntington. Standard land use classification categories were assigned to each individual property, which fit the general land use type and definition of its existing land use.

The Land-Based Classification Standard system utilized by the American Planning Association was reviewed as a guidance tool in order to help organize and define the existing land uses of the City. These standards provided a consistent model for classifying land uses based upon their activity, function, structural character, site development character, and ownership. The following definitions describe the guidance standards set forth:

#### **Activity**

Refers to the actual use of the land based upon its observed characteristics. It describes what actually takes place in physical terms at the time of analysis.

#### **Function**

Refers to the economic function or type of enterprise utilizing the land. Land use terms such as agricultural, commercial, and industrial refer to different enterprises. The type of economic function served by the land use gets classified into a further dimension; it is independent of the actual activity on the land. Enterprises can have a variety of different activities on their premises, yet serve a single function.

#### **Structural Character**

Refers to the type of structure or building on the land. Land use terms embody structural or building characteristics, which suggest the utility of the space. Land use terms such as single-family dwelling, office building, warehouse, hospital, or roadway also describe structural characteristics. Although many activities and functions are closely associated with certain structures, it is not always the case such as in a building which has been repurposed to a new use.

#### **Site Development Characteristics.**

Refers to the overall character of physical development of the land. It describes what is actually on the land in general physical terms. For most land uses, it is simply expressed in terms of whether or not the site is developed.

#### **Ownership**

Refers to the relationship between the use and the person or entity owning the land rights. Since the function of most land uses are either public or private and not both, distinguishing ownership characteristics seems obvious. However, relying solely on the functional character may obscure uses such as private parks, public theatres, private stadiums, private prisons, and public-private uses. Moreover, easements and similar legal devices can also limit or constrain land use activities. The dimension allows for the classification of ownership characteristics more accurately.

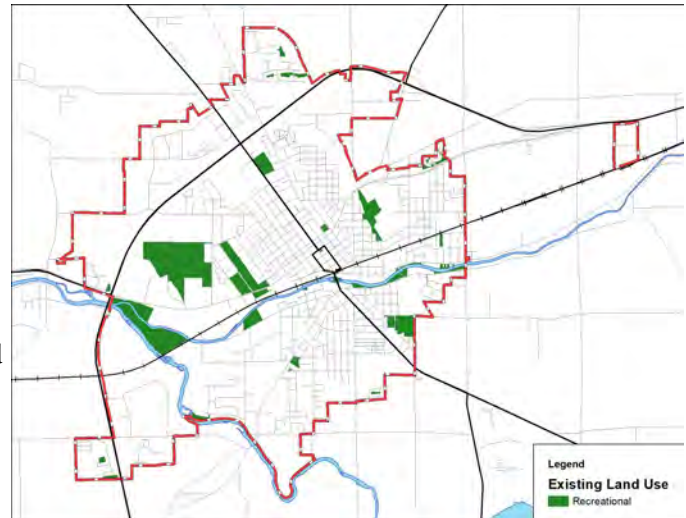
**Existing Land Use Categories**

The following existing land use categories do not reflect the actual zoning of individual properties, but are the product of the five faceted Land-Based Classification Standard analysis. Where more than one single use occupies a property, the most predominate use has been assigned to the property.

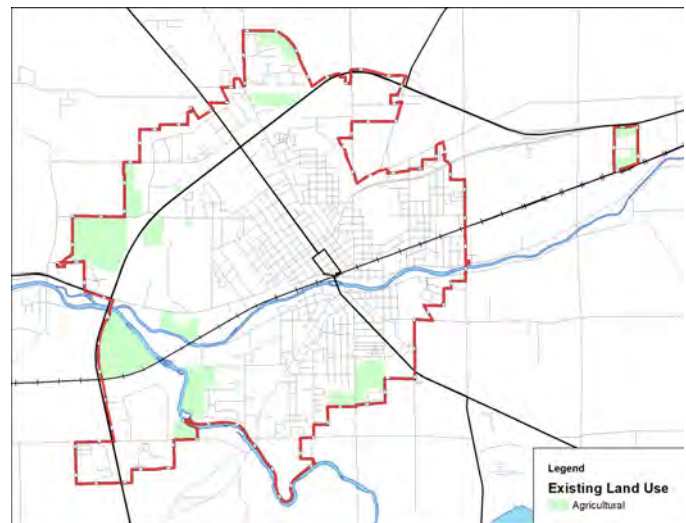
- **Open Land:** Land that is undeveloped and not used for recreational or park purposes. The land contains no buildings or usable structures and includes vacant land zoned for uses but not developed.
- **Recreational:** Land used for nature preservation or passive recreational activities including parks.
- **Agricultural:** Land used for farming or the raising of livestock, including agriculturally oriented, low density, rural single-family dwellings.
- **Residential - Low Density:** Land that is developed with detached single-family residential units.
- **Residential - Medium Density:** Land that is occupied by two and three family residential units, whether detached on a single parcel of land or as apartments, duplexes, or triplexes.
- **Residential - High Density:** Land that contains four or more residential units, including quadplexes, apartment buildings/complexes, or townhouses/condominiums.
- **Residential - Mobile Home:** Land occupied by mobile homes, either independent or as part of a mobile home park.
- **Institutional:** Land used for churches, houses of worship, cemeteries, hospitals, civic uses, schools, or higher education.
- **Commercial:** Land used for a wide range of commercial or service uses, including retail, restaurants, offices, and medical buildings (except hospitals). Commercial land uses are typically located away from or buffered from residential areas due to their high volume of traffic, potential for noise generation, hours of operation, site lighting, and other land use constraints.
- **Utilities:** Land used for infrastructure related activities such as electricity, gas, water treatment, sewer plants, and other public and private utility service.
- **Industrial:** Land that is utilized for the most intensive of all uses, including areas deemed appropriate for light/heavy industry, which are generally not compatible with residential uses. These uses include manufacturing uses whose primary objective is the processing, packaging, and assembling of products; construction, wholesaling, warehousing, and mineral extraction.

Not included in the existing land use map, but a critical component of all land uses is right-of-way. Right-of-Way is land platted or dedicated for public use or access, such as streets and alleyways; including rights-of-way which may be undeveloped or unimproved, but still contain typical utility or infrastructure elements necessary to support development within the surrounding area. The following page contains a geographic summary of each of the existing land uses of the City.

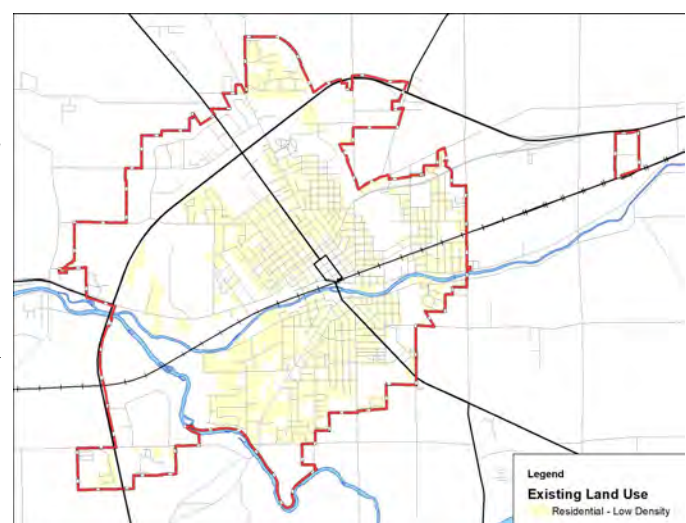
Recreational land uses, not including vacant land, feature those properties which are utilized for passive and active recreational purposes (both developed and undeveloped). Most notably, these land uses include public parks, athletic facilities, subdivision common areas, and nature preserves. The largest individual recreational land uses within the City of Huntington include all of the City parks, Kriegbaum Field, and the nature preserves owned by Acres Land Trust. This land use includes some of the land adjacent to the Wabash and Little Rivers that this land is currently being utilized to its maximum potential as recreational land. There is a notable gap in this type of land use from existing in recent areas of growth, an indicator that new recreational land development has failed to keep pace with the linear expansion of Huntington.



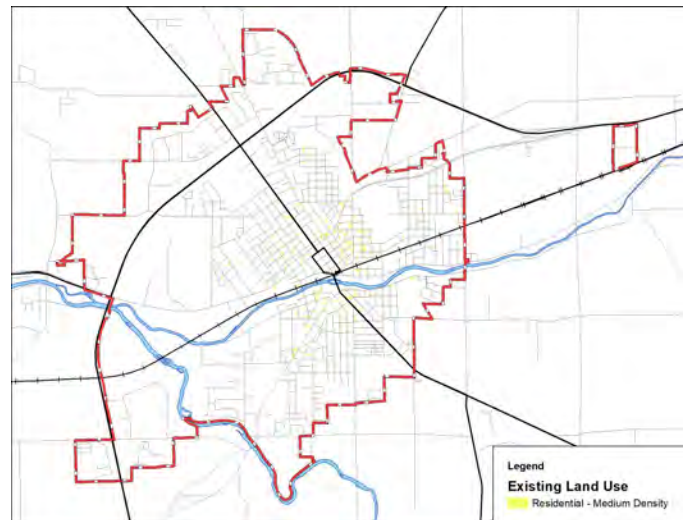
Agricultural land uses within the City of Huntington are scarce and limited mostly to fringe areas. These land uses are located on undeveloped land or land not suitable for other uses due to natural constraints. The largest clustering of this land use can be found in the western part of the City, where they exist almost exclusively (with the exception of land along the Wabash and Little Wabash Rivers) as underdeveloped land surrounding residential and industrial uses. The agricultural land uses in the northern part of the City represent land currently zoned for residential and commercial activities that has yet to be developed as such. On the extreme east, underdeveloped agricultural land uses exist within the Park 24 Industrial Park. The southeastern quadrant of the City features both longtime agricultural land and underutilized land.



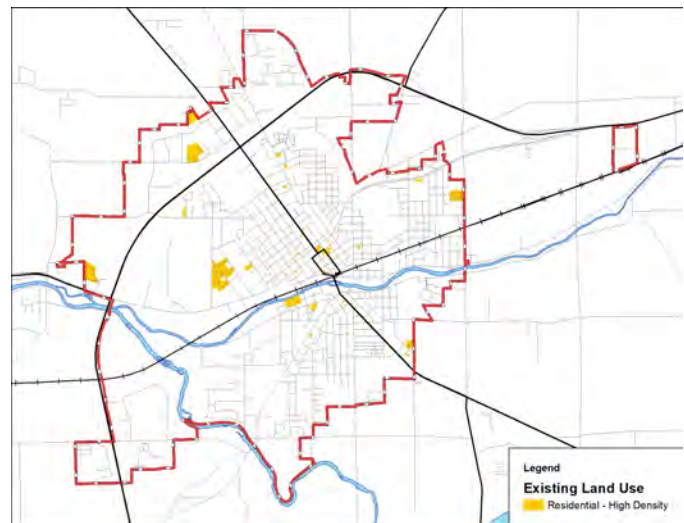
Residential - Low Density land uses make up the largest land use category within the City. They can be found in all areas of the community not currently being utilized for commercial or industrial uses. This land use is primarily confined south of US 24, with the exception of large subdivisions such as Carlisle Crossing and Crown Hill Farm. Well defined clusters can be located in a concentric pattern around the downtown, having developed over decades as the corporate limits of the City grew outwards. Obvious gaps in these areas are a result from industrial land uses which once were located on the periphery of the community, long before the current City limits were expanded. Residential - low density land uses on the extreme edge of the City are a result of recent growth, newer housing developments, and annexation.



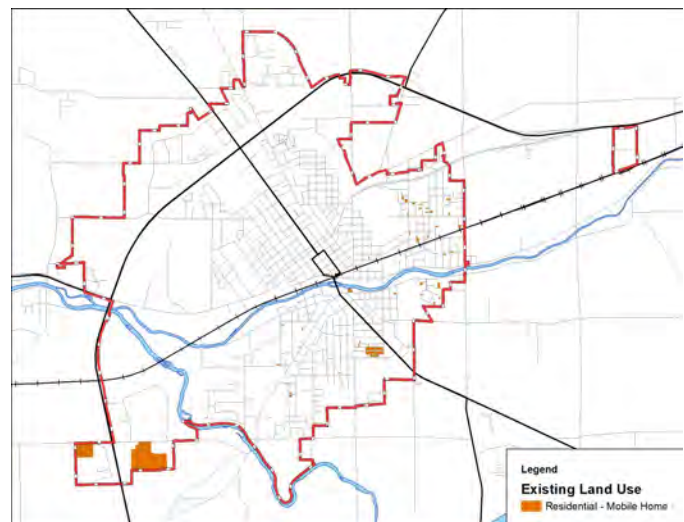
Residential - Medium Density land uses are most prevalent within a mile of the downtown area, scattered among Huntington's established residential neighborhoods. These more dense residential uses typically exist harmoniously within other residential areas, but the conversion of low density residences to medium density residential uses is of a concern to some segments of the community. A notable grouping of residential - medium density land use also exist on the east side of the City. This land use is also beginning to establish itself in the area of Huntington University, a unique area which requires a variety of supporting residential uses to serve its students and staff. There are also some independent residential - medium density land uses in the northwest and southwest parts of the City.



Residential - High Density land uses can be found scattered throughout Huntington. Likely within the same areas which feature residential - medium density land uses. Other areas of the community that feature this land use are typically specialized in their locations, whether they are along major roadways or near denser commercial areas. Some of these land uses, typically newer apartments, are located in areas which were near the City's fringe at their time of construction. This is largely in part due to the need for large tracts of land to accommodate these specific types of residential - high density land uses. The large tracts include the apartment communities of Yellow Retirement, Hauenstein Hills, Central Living, Rivergreen, Horace Mann, Redbud Village, Riverview Terrace, Parkview, Carriage Place, and Cedar Run.

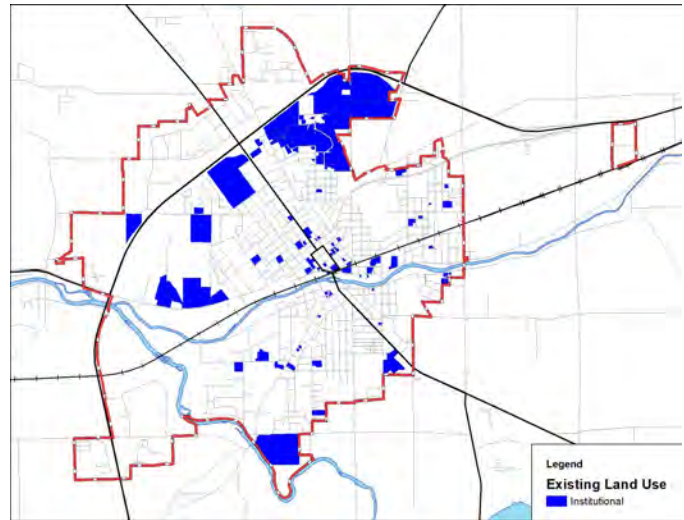


Residential - Mobile Home land uses, or properties which feature residential dwellings that are manufactured in a factory rather than stick built on site, have dwindled in recent years through demolition and the closing of some mobile home parks. This land use category includes stand alone mobile homes and mobile home communities. The largest grouping of this residential land use in Huntington is located on the eastern side of the City. A notable number of these uses also exist across the entire southern side of Huntington. Mobile home communities within this classification include Valley View, Edgewild Hills, and Wall's. This land use has failed to expand into areas of recent growth, a sign that the marketability of this particular type of residential unit is declining.

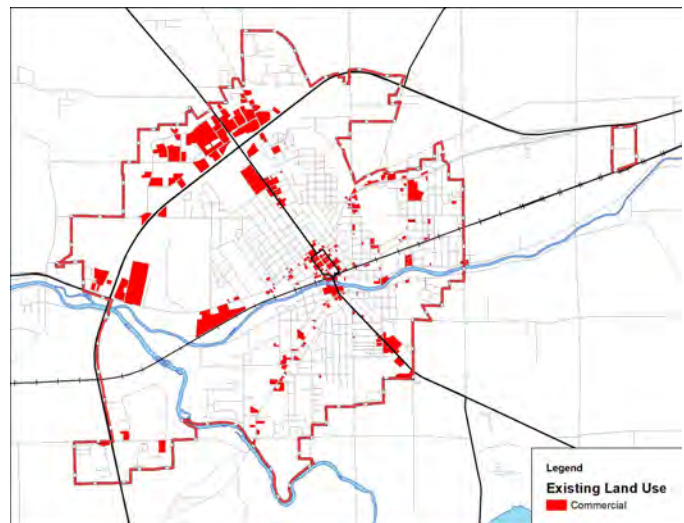




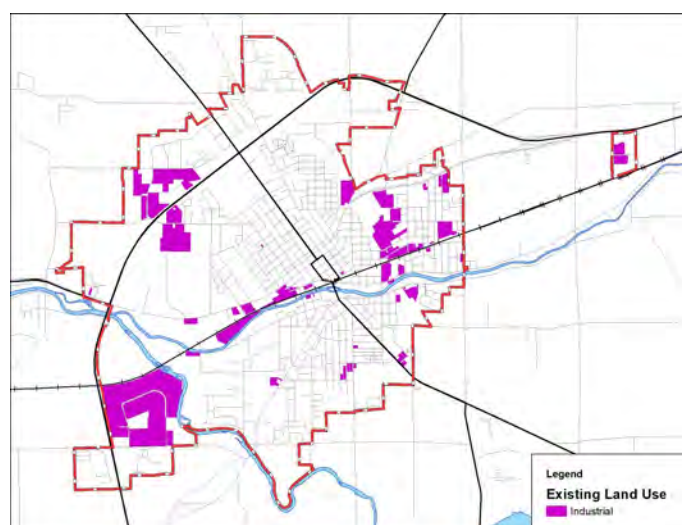
Institutional land uses comprise a significant amount of land area within the City of Huntington. The largest areas of institutional use include Huntington University, Huntington North High School, Victory Noll/St. Felix Friary, and schools on Waterworks Road. Beyond these areas, a large number of institutional land uses can be found within the immediate proximity of downtown. There are also scattered institutional sites across the City, with clusters in the south and east. Most of the scattered institutional land uses within the City of Huntington are representative of religious and institutional medical facilities. This type of land use has failed to permeate areas of industrial growth, which is not uncommon due to the fact that institutional land uses are typically viewed as being supportive of residential quality of life and not commercially oriented.



Commercial land uses within the City, which serve the retail and service needs of residents, are predominately located in a linear fashion along major roadway corridors. Less intense commercial land uses can be found scattered among the City to the south and east in more established areas, typically in historical pockets or commercial activity nodes. The most notable commercial corridors include US 24, Old US 24, First Street, Etna Avenue, and W. Park Drive. Significant commercial nodes exist on Jefferson Street and within the downtown. The largest and most recent area of commercial growth can be located north of US 24 straddling Jefferson Street. This area is also home to the most intense commercial land uses. In recent years, as commercial growth has occurred on the north and dwindled on the south side of Huntington.



Industrial land uses within the City of Huntington are mostly clustered. This clustering encompasses both older industrial areas and areas of more modern industrial growth. Large clusters currently exist on the east side of Huntington, in the Park 24 Industrial Park, along the Little River in the area of W. Park Drive, in the Riverfork Industrial Park, and along Commercial Road. The isolated pockets of industrial land uses represent areas that have historically always been industrial land uses within the City, evolving over time and in some cases representing non-conforming land uses. It is assumed that new industrial land use will be located along major roadway corridors such as US 24 and may be required to have rail access.



## D. Future Land Use

### • Issues and Findings

The intent of the Future Land Use Map and corresponding plan component is to balance residential and non-residential growth with an emphasis on strategic opportunities that fulfill a specific community need as determined by the overall Comprehensive Plan. Balanced growth means that residential development will continue in a manner that is dictated by growth in housing demand. Industrial and office development will both be high priorities, as will appropriate new investment in the redevelopment of downtown.

The Future Land Use Map at the end of this chapter should be utilized when applying land use recommendations to specific properties. The Future Land Use Map builds upon current development patterns within the City. Higher density residential development is found within the core of the community, with lesser densities transitioning outwards to the more rural areas that surround Huntington. Moderate densities are found along major roadway corridors in targeted areas of the City. Future land uses should strive to be compatible with the surrounding areas and appropriate transitional land uses should be utilized as natural buffers. Non-conforming land uses should be discouraged over time, with the caveat that in some cases, their elimination may not be realistic or in the best interest of the community. This Comprehensive Plan strongly recommends that Huntington embrace both mixed use developments and scaled densities. Furthermore, it recommends a focus on infill development and redevelopment in a manner which prevents costly sprawling development from occurring.



*Yeoman Park was once the Erie-Lackawanna rail yard*

The City of Huntington Plan Commission and the Community Development and Redevelopment Department should interpret the following future land use assignments in the best interest of the City of Huntington and in accordance with the Future Land Use Map and goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

- **Open Space:** Land preserved or used for open space purposes, including land with environmental constraints that is worthy of being conserved, floodplains, parks, land utilized as natural buffers between conflicting land uses, and land utilized for other recreational purposes.
- **Agricultural:** Land suitable for extremely low density residential development of a rural character and land that is appropriate for farming and livestock purposes.
- **Residential - Low Density:** Land used for single-family homes on individual lots and on streets with low traffic volumes. These areas are ideally located within walking distance of schools, commercial developments, and other uses which support residential living.
- **Residential - Medium Density:** Land used for single-family and two-family structures upon individual lots. These uses are generally located on the perimeter of neighborhoods, along collector streets, and within close proximity to commercially developed areas or the urban core.

- **Residential - High Density:** Land uses with three or more dwelling units on a single lot, including apartment complexes, townhomes, and mobile home parks. These uses may serve as transitional areas between medium density residential uses and commercial uses. These uses are typically located on arterial or higher order streets where the roadway network is sufficient to handle anticipated traffic volumes.
- **Higher Education:** Land within the immediate vicinity of an educational institution, where related commercial, entertainment, service, and housing functions that support such an environment should be encouraged in order to provide development patterns which support this type of primary use.
- **Mixed Use:** Land uses that provide for a mixture of residential and commercial uses on a single lot or land within a general location that could be developed as either type of use as a whole, depending upon the character of the surrounding area and its relevant compatibility.
- **Commercial - Neighborhood:** Land used for small neighborhood scale retail, service, or convenience retail that serves a neighborhood market. Ideally, these uses are located at the intersection of residential streets and/or collectors and are within walking distance of residential areas.
- **Commercial - Downtown:** Land used for activities that are pedestrian-friendly and that require minimal parking area. A well defined mix of uses, including small scale retail activity, restaurants, professional services, and other activities that enhance the future identity of the downtown as the central business district or Main Street. This category should also promote a mixture of activities, including residential uses on the upper floors and multi-storied residential buildings.
- **Commercial - General:** Land used for retail and service oriented activities, including big box stores, that are primarily accessed by vehicle and may require larger parking and/or service areas than that of the Commercial - Downtown areas.
- **Industrial - Low Intensity:** Land used for manufacturing, wholesale, and office activities which are minimally noticeable by the periphery senses.
- **Industrial - Medium Intensity:** Land uses which include a mixture of warehousing, manufacturing, and general industrial uses that are not overly intensive.
- **Industrial - High Intensity:** Land used for the most intensive of industrial activities, including those uses which extract and/or process materials from the site, or provide for bulk storage of petroleum or chemicals. Examples of additional uses include concrete or asphalt plants, truck terminals, junkyards, and other uses that should be distanced from developed residential uses due to their impacts on residential quality of life.

- **Strategies and Recommendations**

1. Strive to maintain a balance of land uses to reflect the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan. This complex task ensures that tax revenues are generated to support residential development (since it is generally not self-sustaining). It is crucial that an adequate supply of undeveloped land exists to ensure that economic opportunities which are beneficial to the City will take place. It is also important to improve the balance between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units by increasing homeownership, which helps to build wealth and stability in the community. The City has become home to many rental properties over the years, some of which lead to unsatisfactory community development. Land use balance also includes the protection of irreplaceable open space and prime farmland near or just outside of its fringes.
  - The City will continue to focus on industrial development to build the tax base and generate revenues sufficient to support residential development. Office development will be encouraged in appropriate areas and to the extent that the market will support. The City will recognize industrial development as a significant priority, especially in targeted areas of the City that offer highway and rail access.
  - Institutional uses are supported in their long-term plans for expanding and maintaining facilities. Measures should be taken to minimize the impacts of expansion related activities on nearby properties. Growth should be permitted in a manner which prevents devaluation of the area and lessens significant tax base impacts. New facilities should be seamlessly integrated into adjacent areas .
  - Commercial or mixed use centers should be promoted on a neighborhood scale. These centers should serve one or more neighborhoods and be easily accessible by foot or bike. It is critically important that these centers have a character that is appropriate to the neighborhood context, have a nearly unnoticeable impact, and the variety of their retail or service offerings be appropriate for the surrounding area.
  - The City will support single-family residential development and discourage the development of or conversion to higher density residential uses from occurring in unplanned areas.
  - Undesirable or imposing land uses should be sited in areas with sufficient buffering and distance from other incompatible land uses. Some examples of these land uses include: automobile repair, junkyards, adult businesses, and waste/recycling centers.
  - Open space preservation is a high priority of the City. The City should continue to provide an ample amount of parkland and other recreational and conservation areas as appropriate. River corridors and floodplains should be a priority for a continuous system of interconnected open space.
  - The City should continue to identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas within its corporate limits in order to protect key resources such as wellheads and aquifers.
2. The City should promote, consider, and approve developments that adhere to the density requirements and intensity of uses that are sustainable and fit within the strategies and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The City should administer development policies and procedures in conjunction with sound planning principles and flexibility to ensure that unforeseen circumstances and opportunities are properly considered within the overall context of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - The highest densities should occur in the core of the City. Infill development and redevelopment will support the role of the Downtown in matching or even exceeding the density of surrounding properties where appropriate.



- Less dense development should surround the City's core in its historic neighborhoods. Infill and redevelopment should match, but not exceed, densities within these neighborhoods.
  - Residential densities are recommended to lessen as they move away from the core and primary corridors of the City. This shall serve as a means of transitioning to the low density landscape that surrounds the City.
  - In general, the density and intensity of development should be compatible with the general characteristic of the area in which the development is located. Changes in density or intensity may be supported if it enhances the viability and character of the surrounding area.
  - Higher density or intensity may be supportable at key intersections and other locations that are appropriate for intensive activity. However, the design and execution of such development must be of high quality and integrate well with the surrounding area.
  - Higher density or intensity will be supported in projects that mix uses and seek to create pedestrian oriented environments.
3. Land use transitions (at the community, neighborhood, and site level) must be adequate and appropriate to minimize negative impacts and to provide for an integrated community. Proper transitions ensure the development of rational land use patterns that are consistent with the City's vision.
- Land use transitions should be consistent with the Future Land Use Map to ensure land use compatibility.
  - Appropriate land use transitions should successfully integrate mixed use developments that may include single-family neighborhoods with multi-family uses, office uses, medical uses, parks and recreation, and open space uses.
  - The City should promote landscape buffers and transitional elements through zoning and other development controls for residential uses, intense commercial uses, and industrial uses that occur adjacent to or within close proximity of each other.
4. The City of Huntington should work cooperatively with its Redevelopment Commission and Huntington County to create a land bank program that is geared towards the redevelopment of distressed areas of the City. Within the City, it is likely that a residential land bank program would be the most beneficial, although industrial land banking would also be a worthwhile investment in the future.
- Informal land banking activities have already taken place on an industrial level by the City, but a formal land bank program may yield more tangible results.
  - Stronger state laws would allow the City to take a more active approach to a land bank program and expedite the land acquisition process.
5. The City expects future development to use creative site design in order to accomplish the following detailed objectives. These approaches should be utilized when designing sites.
- Outstanding natural features such as woodlands, ravines, and stream corridors should be preserved.
  - A mixture of residential units should be provided for within the same development as zoning allows.

- Connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles should be provided for.
  - The use of clustered/open space development should be employed in order to preserve open space.
  - Encourage mixed uses and various densities where appropriate.
6. The City of Huntington should continually evaluate the need to exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction as may be allowed by state law to areas beyond its current corporate limits. The areas just beyond the City's limits often face unique development pressures as common development trends are to build upon vacant agricultural land instead of seeking redevelopment opportunities. Because of such development pressures, it is critically important that the City play a role in the development of these fringe areas, especially when City services are anticipated or already provided. The City cannot rely solely on the county to determine which land uses are in its best interests in these fringe areas.
- At minimum, the jurisdictional area should encompass all land serviced by City of Huntington municipal services or utilities.
  - Additional land beyond the municipal service area, but within the 2 mile statutory limit, may also be of importance to the City. The City's potential land use control over these areas is at the discretion of the County, therefore strategic partnerships may be required.

## **E. Development Standards**

### **• Issues and Findings**

#### **Development Controls**

The City of Huntington employs a variety of regulatory strategies to protect its character and community resources. Land use regulations are enforced under the City's police powers, and have been deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Standards of varying degree are applied to all land uses within the City of Huntington and are typically reviewed at the time of new development or in conjunction with a property that undergoes a change in use.

#### **Zoning**

Indiana Code 36-7-4 empowers cities, towns, and counties to adopt and implement zoning within the State of Indiana; however, zoning is not mandatory under state law. The primary tool for applying development controls within the City of Huntington is through established zoning standards. Zoning is the legal mechanism for controlling and regulating uses within a community. Zoning is the most important method of land use regulation undertaken at the local government level. It divides a local jurisdiction into geographically contiguous zones. The local zoning code prescribes what may be done in each zone and similarly, what may not be done. Zoning is universally regarded as a part of the "police power" granted to local governments through enabling legislation. Zoning is required to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and thereby allows the community to shape its character and built environment, which helps to sustain development and create a reliable property tax base.

## **F. Zoning**

- **Issues and Findings**

The City of Huntington Zoning Code and Zoning Map dictate how land is currently regulated by use and illustrates the City's existing development patterns. The Common Council of the City of Huntington adopted zoning across the City in 1958. Over the years, the Zoning Code has been amended numerous times to update existing and adopt new land use regulations. The City of Huntington Zoning Code regulates all land within the corporate limits, but does not currently include an extraterritorial jurisdiction. Zoning and Subdivision Control Codes are two of the primary tools utilized to implement the vision established in the Comprehensive Plan.

### **City of Huntington Zoning Code**

The City of Huntington's current land use regulations have been amended regularly since their original adoption. As a result, the regulations contained within resemble a patchwork of rules that are disjointed, sometimes difficult to interpret, and at times conflicting. While the current regulations may have served the City well in the time preceding their adoption, they are no longer adequate enough to provide a modern mechanism needed to implement the Comprehensive Plan or to keep pace with new development techniques and trends. This plan recommends that the current Zoning Code be revisited following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. As is typical, plans such as this often raise zoning issues or make recommendations for the implementation of strategies that require new or significantly modified development codes.

### **Extraterritorial Jurisdiction**

Indiana Code 36-7-4-205 allows a municipal plan commission to implement zoning and subdivision regulations for the unincorporated areas located just outside a community's corporate limits. There are currently two degrees of extraterritorial jurisdiction that may be exercised by a municipal plan commission. Upon approval from the County Executive Body and after a recommendation is made by the County Plan Commission, land up to a maximum of two-miles may be regulated by the City's land use controls. The second type of jurisdiction is allowed by right to areas within two-miles that the municipality currently provides services to. The City of Huntington does not currently exercise such authority, but this plan recommends that it frequently evaluate its use in the future. It is also recognized that pending legislation in the General Assembly contemplates the reduction or elimination of this authority. Part of a broader effort to erode the home rule authority of cities and towns across Indiana.

### **Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals**

The City of Huntington also administers its land use regulations through its Board of Zoning Appeals. This Board consists of five appointed members who hear, determine, approve, and deny special exceptions, variances, and administrative appeals from land use regulations, subcommittees, and Community Development & Redevelopment staff. The Board conducts regular monthly public hearings at which it acts upon requests made by applicants. The public hearing portion of the meeting allows anyone from the community the opportunity to speak about the request before the Board makes a decision. The Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals grants variances of use or development standards based upon a set criteria outlined in Indiana Code. Decisions are made with the utmost regard for the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community.

## • Strategies and Recommendations

1. The current City of Huntington Zoning Code is not user-friendly. Several general changes are recommended to significantly improve the user's ability to read and understand code requirements.
  - Re-organize and incorporate more recent land use amendments so that similar provisions are located together under common headings.
  - Add graphics to illustrate essential definitions and provisions that are difficult to understand or visualize. Incorporate tables to simplify quantitative regulations in a uniform manner.
2. Modify the existing Euclidian zoning system in order to develop a hybrid, pyramid zoning hierarchy. Instead of a standard pyramid which allows all users in more restrictive districts to be automatically allowed into each successive (less restricted) district, this system would only allow certain uses from the less restrictive district or more commonly those uses with one degree of separation into the more restrictive district.
3. Establish more commercial districts of varying degrees of intensity and scale. Each district should have a distinct purpose, be applicable in specific situations, and differ from one another in terms of the permitted uses and desired character.
4. Condense the number of industrial zoning districts within the City based upon an evaluation of the types of permitted uses within each district. It is assumed that one or more of the districts could be eliminated based upon such reclassification.
5. All definitions should be consolidated into a single definition section, thereby eliminating duplicates and definitions of various meanings. In the case of sections in which unique definitions may apply, those unique definitions should be clearly limited to only the applicable section.
6. A "General Provisions" section should be added to encompass many of the standards that are scattered throughout the zoning code and do not have a fully developed section or relationship to one another.
7. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions in the zoning code have been developed as required by state law. The PUD standards should be evaluated and possibly updated, as relaxed standards have resulted in abuse of the PUD. While a PUD can be a useful tool to encourage creative design that benefits the end user and the community, it is not appropriate in all cases and is not intended to be a convenient substitute for conventional zoning requirements or to circumvent the rezoning process.
8. The off-street parking requirements within the Zoning Code should be reviewed and updated. The City should consider the incorporation of shared parking standards in areas where appropriate and possibly eliminating off-street parking requirements for unique areas such as the downtown.
9. Standards or criteria should be incorporated into the Zoning Code for all official decisions. This will eliminate the possibility of discretionary reviews which lack standards for decision-makers to utilize.
10. All official zoning approvals should incorporate set expiration dates, typically of two years, to prevent non-conformities from being created many years after their initial approval in a manner that is not consistent with updated regulatory documents.
11. The Zoning Code should be redeveloped in order to incorporate the vision, goals, and objectives of this plan.



## **G. Subdivision Controls**

### **• Issues and Findings**

The City of Huntington regulates the subdivision of land and the movement of property lines through its Subdivision Code. As allowed by Indiana Code 36-7-4-700, the City has established minimum standards for each of its zoning districts and general requirements that must be met in order to subdivide land. The purpose of the Subdivision Code is to:

- Protect the public health and safety
- Guide development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan
- Provide for a sound built environment and related open space
- Protect the compatibility, character, economic stability, and orderliness of development through design standards
- Ensure that adequate facilities and infrastructure will be provided for
- Conserve and protect natural resources
- Promote the coordination of existing and proposed roads, utilities, and community facilities

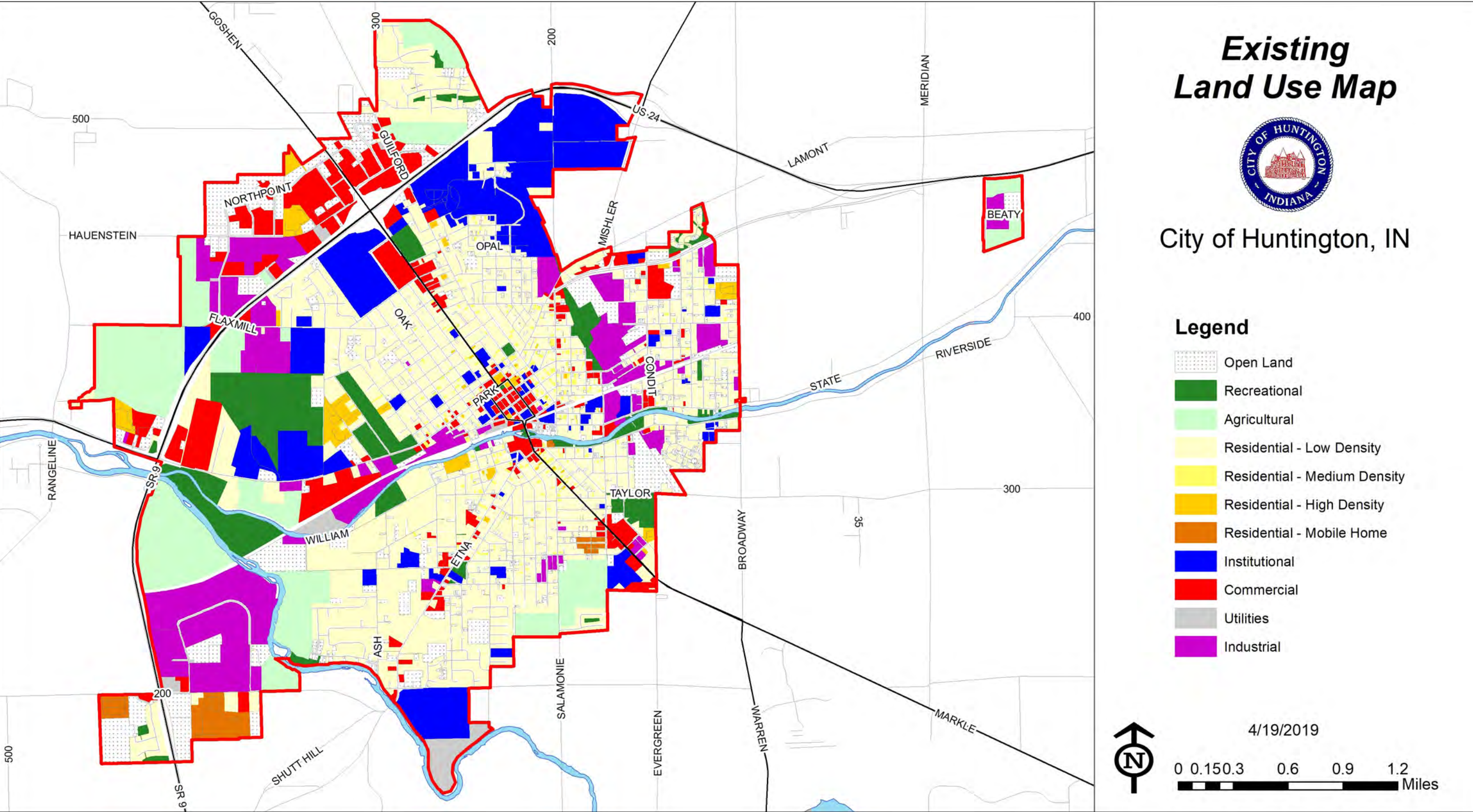
In general, the Subdivision Code should be revised to support key goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan as it relates to encouraging appropriate neighborhood scale and providing a pedestrian friendly environment.

### **• Strategies and Recommendations**

1. The current City of Huntington Subdivision Code, while more modern than the Zoning Code, is still not as user-friendly as it could be. Several general changes are recommended to significantly improve the user's ability to read and understand code requirements.
  - Add graphics to illustrate essential definitions and provisions that are difficult to understand or visualize.
  - Incorporate tables to simplify quantitative regulations in a uniform manner.
2. The definitions section should be reviewed and updated to reflect modern and appropriate terminology.
3. Standards from The City of Huntington Street Manual should be incorporated by reference into the Subdivision Code. In addition, it is recommended that the Street Manual be reviewed and updated by the appropriate City Departments.
4. The Subdivision Code should be redeveloped in order to incorporate the vision, goals, and objectives of this plan.

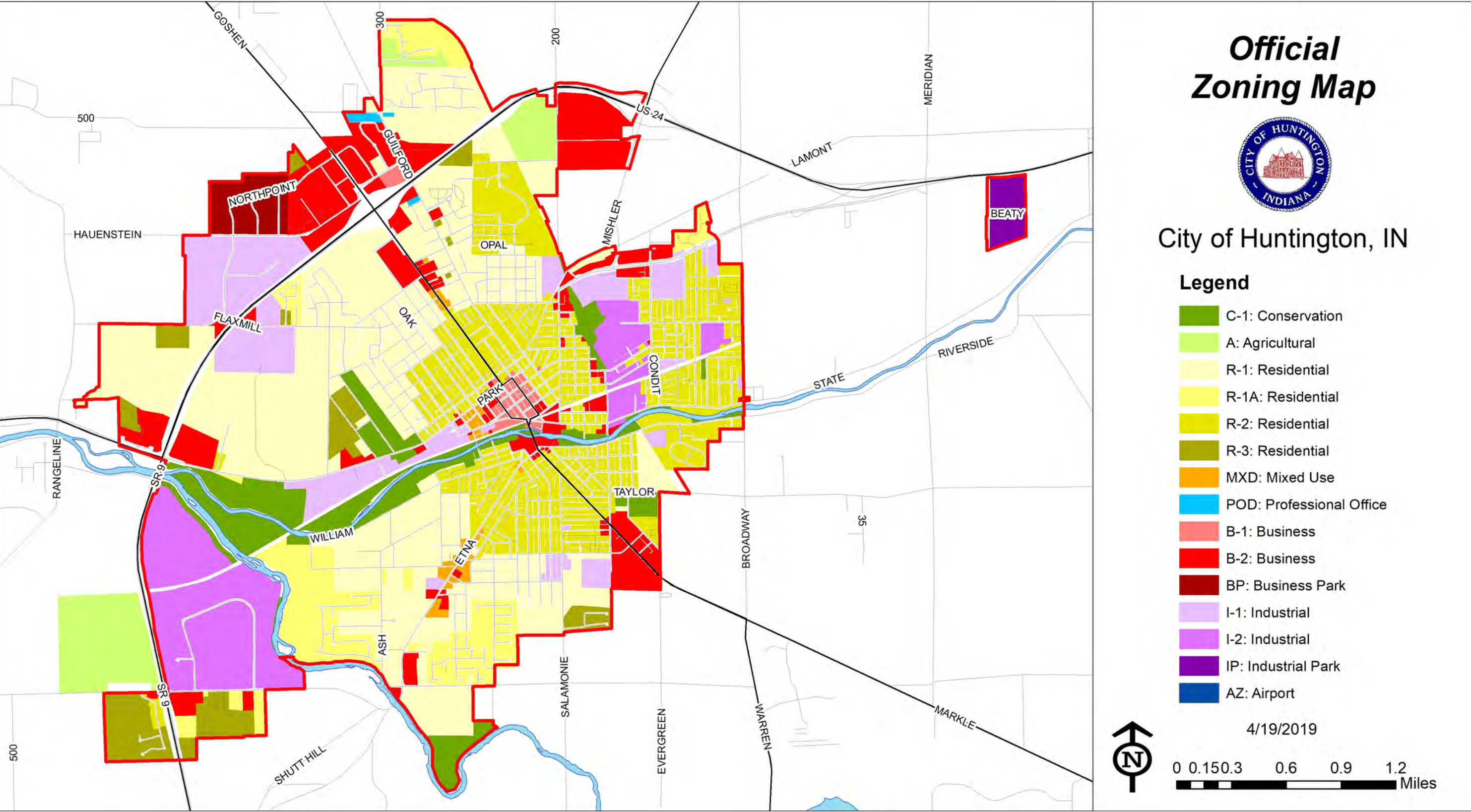
## **H. Land Use Maps**

The following pages contain land use related maps for the City of Huntington, including: Existing Land Use Map, Zoning Map, and the Future Land Use Map.



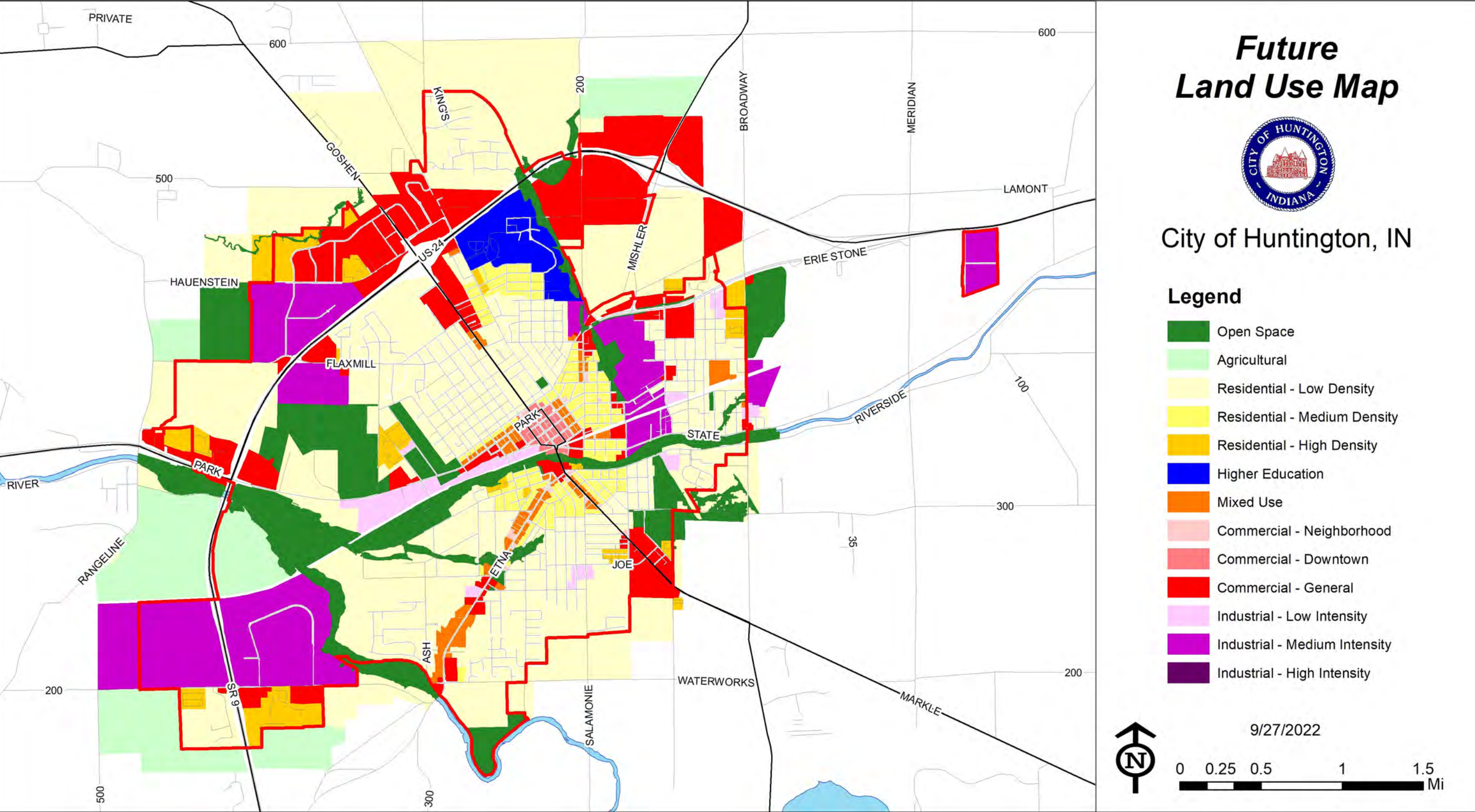


















## XIV. IMPLEMENTATION

*“The value of an idea lies in the using of it”*

*-Thomas Edison-*





## A. Introduction

The intent of the City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan is to maintain and promote the vibrancy of this great City through various planning efforts. The Comprehensive Plan develops goals, outlines objectives, and recommends strategies for the City to develop a strong and diverse economy, exceptional community services, housing opportunities for all residents, a sustainable environment, and an efficient transportation network that supports its future. This Comprehensive Plan describes and analyzes each element of the community and recommends goals, objects, strategies, and implementation tools in order to guide its future planning.

Successful implementation is critical to ensure that the plan has a marked impact on the community. The City of Huntington Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a working document that will guide community leaders in making decisions, establishing priorities, and committing to actions that will positively affect the future of the City.

This section is one of the more important sections of the plan since it identifies how the goals, objectives, and strategies of the plan will be carried out. It does this by identifying a timeframe for the implementation of recommendations and responsible parties in the implementation process. Specifically, this implementation section seeks to achieve the following:

- Determine action steps necessary to carry out the recommendations and strategies of the plan.
- Set up both short and long-term timeframes for accomplishing the strategies of the plan.
- Delegate implementation responsibilities to appropriate boards, commissions, and bodies that are capable of such.
- Provide a framework for updating the plan as needed.

The plan implementation will focus on two primary functions of the Comprehensive Plan

1. It provides a sound policy foundation for all decisions of the City of Huntington regarding land use, transportation, and other plan elements. The notion of consulting the plan should be performed in ongoing activities of the City such as reviewing rezoning requests or implementing policy changes.
2. It is the “to do” list of the community. The influence of the plan on Huntington’s future will be a product of the motivating power and shared vision it communicates and the effectiveness of actions taken to realize this vision. The vision will be realized by constant progress in adhering to a well-defined course of implementation that sets priorities for effective short and long-term actions.

The Community Development & Redevelopment Department, through the City of Huntington Plan Commission, is responsible for the maintenance and updating of the Comprehensive Plan. This is accomplished through regular monitoring of plan implementation and the processing of amendments to revise and update the plan as needed. The Department also reviews proposed land use development regulations for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The Community Development & Redevelopment Department is also charged with monitoring progress of the directives in the Comprehensive Plan and communicating with the identified responsible parties.

## **B. How to Use the Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used on a daily basis as public and private decisions are made concerning development, redevelopment, capital improvement projects, economic incentives, and other matters affecting the community's growth. Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will partially be driven by the availability of resources (both human and fiscal capital) sufficient to guarantee success. This section summarizes the ways in which the plan will be used, not only through long-range land use planning activities of the City, but also through external agencies which bring grants and resources into the community in order to better the lives of the citizens of Huntington.

### **Guidelines for updating the Comprehensive Plan**

The Plan should be reviewed and/or updated every 5 years over the life of the plan, as appropriate. Goals, objectives, and policies shall not be revised without public input. Changes should be made in the original plan document, but may also be made as an addendum to the original plan if necessary.

### **Items to review and update**

There are several items to review and update in the Comprehensive Plan; the information below identifies those areas of the Plan that should be revised in conjunction with the five year update:

- Changes to demographics and existing conditions – The existing conditions section or any part of the plan containing demographics is one of the areas where change always occurs. New census figures are released every ten years and estimates are prepared regularly. Plans that get adopted prior to the release of new census data should be reviewed after the data is released in order to ensure that the most current and accurate data is included. Typically plans that are prepared prior to new census data have to rely on previous census information or on estimates. Data that should be reviewed and revised include: population, unemployment, large employer stats, and housing data.
- Review of implementation strategies – Another area for review and update in the plan are the action implementation strategies. As items are implemented, it is good to note such by providing some way to record what has occurred or what is currently being planned. A regular report on implementation, with every update, is an excellent way to determine what has been implemented. The review should also focus on those items that have not been implemented at the time of the update.
- Review of what is working and what is not working – It is also important to review what items in the plan are working and what policies are having the opposite effect. These problematic policies should be reviewed and modified as needed. If the goals, objectives, and policies need to be revised, such actions should be undertaken by the Department, Plan Commission, and a steering committee.
- Review of maps – The maps within this Comprehensive Plan should also be regularly reviewed and revised when necessary.
- Department and project budgets – Various City Departments and project budgets should be reviewed according to the policies and recommendations presented in the Comprehensive Plan. Numerous objectives and strategies can be implemented this way. As the budget for the City is prepared and reviewed, the plan should be utilized as a guide to ensure that capital and operations investments are consistent with the plan and its growth priorities.

**Development Approvals**

Administrative approvals relative to development should be strongly predicated on the policies set forth by the Comprehensive Plan. Administrative and organizational recommendations in particular should be followed in the consideration of zoning decisions. Although, a degree of flexibility will be necessary to ensure that decisions are based upon current circumstances, which may dictate flexibility in applying the policies of the plan. Major deviations that are not consistent with the Plan will require a formal amendment of the Comprehensive Plan in a public process.

**Educating the Community**

The Department of Community Development will administer the Comprehensive Plan and will be responsible for communicating the Plan to the public. Copies of the Comprehensive Plan will be available with the City Clerk-Treasurer, in the Community Development & Redevelopment Department, on the Department's website, and on file with the County Recorder in accordance with IC 36-7-4-509.

**Amending the Plan**

If the Plan Commission and City Council support a development proposal that would significantly deviate from the policies set forth by the Comprehensive Plan, a formal amendment of the plan and respective policy will be required. Such amendments should cite in the resolution, the facts that support the amendment. Such amendment should be weighed carefully. The Plan Commission will provide a recommendation regarding each amendment, prior to action by Council. It is suggested that the Department circulate any such amendments and request comments prior to Council consideration.

**Interpreting the Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan is a set of official City policies to manage development and growth. When combined with implementation strategies, these elements establish a vision for the future of the City of Huntington. The narrative that explains specific objectives and strategies provides insight into the basis of thinking for those policies. Changing circumstances could influence the interpretation of a policy, but that should only occur where the broader goals and principles of the plan are consistently followed. In accordance with Indiana Code, the City of Huntington Board of Zoning Appeals has the ultimate authority to interpret this plan and any ambiguity created as a result of different interpretations.

## **C. Implementation Matrix**

The following implementation matrix will be utilized by the Community Development and Redevelopment Department and the City of Huntington Plan Commission in guiding the City's implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Items for implementation are organized by their location within the Plan. The matrix summarizes the strategies and recommendations for each part of the Plan. Specific strategies and recommendations are listed with a recommended timeframe, using 2019 as a base year, for completion. Responsible parties are indicated in conjunction with relevant objectives and strategies.



# IMPLEMENTATION

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>IV. City Image and Identity</u>			
IV-C-1	Perform a district inventory that details both the geographic and physical description of the districts of the City of Huntington as they presently exist.	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
IV-C-2	Incorporate each of Huntington's districts into the overall marketing of Huntington as a community. As Huntington works to build its image and branding, elements from each district can be incorporated into the showcase. Each district contains unique physical attributes with businesses, services, and amenities that are appealing to residents and visitors alike. The promotion will result in increased awareness of the various shopping, entertainment, and cultural destinations that each district has to offer, collectively making Huntington even more of a destination.	Chamber of Commerce Visitor & Convention Bureau	Ongoing
IV-C-3	Perform a wayfinding study and implement a wayfinding program to provide signage to better direct visitors to the different districts. Each district should have wayfinding signage design elements that create a unique district identity, drawing upon historic and cultural elements in crafting the identity.	Visitor & Convention Bureau City of Huntington	5-10 Years
IV-D-1	Continue to implement the primary gateway program with uniform gateway signage and landscaping at all primary gateways and ensure consistent maintenance of these areas.	Visitor & Convention Bureau City of Huntington	0-5 Years
IV-D-2	Support community organizations that seek to improve the image around gateway points to eliminate elements that detract from a welcoming invitation to Huntington.	Community	Ongoing
IV-D-3	Encourage the development of additional public and private secondary gateways. These gateways should be unique to the areas they represent and draw upon historical and cultural elements to create a visual voice for these special locations.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IV-E-1	Perform a physical analysis of primary and secondary corridors to compare the imagery of the streetscape periphery along the roadways and assess the physical constraints and enhancement opportunities.	Community Development & Redevelopment Department Engineering Department	0-5 Years
IV-E-2	Explore possible partnership opportunities with key businesses and institutions located along primary and secondary corridors to discuss the importance of physical image enhancement. Any enhancement should be custom tailored to each individual participant while complementary to the overall program.	Community	Ongoing
IV-E-3	Coordinate primary corridor enhancements with the Indiana Department of Transportation. As a critical partner of primary corridors, INDOT has full authority over most of Huntington's primary corridors. INDOT improvements already approved and future roadway improvements will have a significant impact on the appearance of Huntington's corridors. It is important that the City of Huntington convey its desire to tailor any relevant improvements to match local interests through context sensitive design.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IV-E-4	Examine the possibility of adopting zoning overlay districts that preserve and enhance primary and secondary corridors. The City should work with various stakeholders to identify redevelopment opportunities along corridors that have a significant impact on the image of Huntington. Overlay districts that consider design guidelines, mixed use development of appropriate scale, and specific permitted uses will help to preserve and enhance the economic vitality of corridors.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>IV. City Image and Identity (continued)</u>			
IV-F-1	Capitalize on the Little River as an amenity, implementing strategic steps from the Parks & Recreation Department Trails & Greenways Master Plan and encourage suitable development along these areas.	City of Huntington Huntington Parks & Recreation Department	Ongoing
IV-F-2	Support existing and encourage the development of additional neighborhood associations across the city.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IV-F-3	Continue consistent Code Enforcement and evaluate the need and effectiveness of property maintenance codes.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IV-F-4	Revisit the types of permitted uses within each zoning district and increase the enforcement of such zoning standards.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
IV-F-5	Pursue grants and other public and private funding mechanisms that allow property owners to improve structures.	Community Agencies City of Huntington	Ongoing
IV-F-6	Begin a citywide image building and branding campaign to increase the appeal of Huntington to residents and visitors alike that showcases the various amenities that Huntington has to offer.	Visitor & Convention Bureau Chamber of Commerce City of Huntington	0-5 Years

V. Government & Community Services

V-D-1	Ensure that the City is able to meet the additional demand for services that are brought on by annexation through the establishment of general criteria which evaluates utility master plans and other internal capacities so that new areas are serviced and service to existing areas is not diminished.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-D-2	Utility connections for development is the primary motivation for property owners to seek annexation. Therefore utility connections should not be permitted beyond the City Limits without annexation or other agreements in the most extreme circumstances.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-D-3	Utilize agreements in lieu of annexation only if immediate voluntary annexation cannot be obtained due to legal requirements - recognizing that erosion of home rule authority by the General Assembly may null and void any agreements in the future.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-D-4	Require owners of land to be annexed into the City to be subject to their proportionate share of the City's bonded indebtedness.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-D-5	Require that infrastructure recommendations in the Capital Plan and utility master plans match future annexations. Utility extensions should only be made to serve annexed areas, not to open new areas to development unless specifically called for by the Plan Commission and Comprehensive Plan through the future land use map.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-E-1	Continue to provide water and sewer services to meet current and future needs of the residents, businesses, and industries of the City of Huntington.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-E-2	Discourage the development and use of private drinking water wells within the City Limits.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-E-3	Ensure that adequate infrastructure and capacity are in place, prior to development.	City of Huntington	Ongoing

# IMPLEMENTATION

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>V. Government &amp; Community Services (continued)</u>			
V-E-4	As part of a Capital Improvement Plan, develop a phased rate increase schedule for each utility in order to ensure that adequate financing is in place to support necessary improvement, maintenance, and expansion. Continually develop and adjust rate structures based on user class. Heavy users should pay a proportionate share of the distribution, collection and treatment cost based on their demand on the system.	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
V-E-5	The municipal utilities are operated as separate business units of the City and must be supported by rates and fees. Subsidizing those operations with tax supported funds or failing to adjust rates accordingly to account for operating costs, maintenance, system expansion, and modernization is not in the best interest of the community. The City should operate the utilities as businesses and not succumb to political pressure when considering demonstrated needs or opportunities for the utilities to better serve the community.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-E-6	Implement appropriate elements from the recently completed Water Master Plan, Sewer Master Plan, Water Supply and Treatment Study, and other long-range utility planning documents.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-E-7	Review existing standards and policies to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative standards and methods of treatment with an emphasis of sustainable technologies, and encourage their use when appropriate and cost effective in order to decrease the demand on city utility infrastructure.	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
V-E-8	Continue implementation of the Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) that will minimize environmental impacts, reduce combined sewage overflows (CSO) and maximize capacity of the stormwater and sewer infrastructure.	City of Huntington	7-10 Years
V-F-1	Continue to provide a safe and efficient road network that adequately meets the needs of the community.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-F-2	Develop a unified Capital Plan to ensure that new infrastructure, maintenance and equipment are adequately provided in the most cost efficient manner.	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
V-F-3	Continue to develop and maintain various inventories (street paving, street striping, sidewalks, signage, etc.) that track conditions and maintenance efforts so that safety standards are met.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-F-4	Begin long term planning that evaluates existing traffic demands so that improvements can be made in advance of new development needs.	City of Huntington	5-10 Years
V-F-5	Update City Services equipment as needed with more technologically advanced equipment that allow for more efficient service delivery, decreased worker injuries, and reduced the overall cost burden on the public.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-G-1	Evaluate current facilities and the number of employees so that the growth rate of public safety departments are established in conjunction with the population and size of the City of Huntington. Evaluate the necessity and effectiveness of staff and/or facility adjustments to create a safe and appropriate service ratio that helps to combat rising operational costs and fluctuating tax revenues.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-G-2	Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of combining and consolidating certain public safety functions, such as a fire territory, with other agencies and jurisdictions that maximize the level of public service and reduce costs for all parties involved in a manner that results in a lower tax burden to the public.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-G-3	Continue to evaluate the location of public safety facilities in order to improve response times and evenly distribute coverage areas in a manner that follow growth patterns (in both density and land area) when considering facility upgrades or new facilities.	City of Huntington	Ongoing

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>V. Government &amp; Community Services (continued)</u>			
V-H-1	Work with utilities to improve services levels and expand service areas to meet the future needs of the City. A full array of utilities should remain available to locations within the City of Huntington, with a focus on advanced telecommunication technologies, especially in areas designated for industrial and commercial growth.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-H-2	Coordinate with utilities in advance of infrastructure projects to ensure that necessary repairs and upgrades are coordinated.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-H-3	Consult with non municipal utilities on areas targeted for growth to ensure that adequate supply and infrastructure is available to service anticipated growth in order to sufficiently support development.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-I-1	Encourage the location of larger healthcare related businesses within proximity to existing and proposed medical centers. The City will encourage these related services to be located in clusters that are compatible in scale with the surrounding land uses and serve the needs of the community.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-I-2	Encourage the location of small, neighborhood style healthcare services to be strategically located throughout the community in order to provide convenient access to primary medical services.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
V-I-3	Continue to support healthcare and related wellness services, programs, and opportunities to the residents of Huntington in order to further elevate quality of life and wellness.	Community	Ongoing

VI. Downtown

VI-C-1	Continue and expand strategic partnerships with economic development and tourism organizations that allow for development, redevelopment, educational, and promotional opportunities.	Main Street Huntington Chamber of Commerce Visitors & Convention Bureau HCUED City of Huntington	Ongoing
VI-C-2	Identify and target specific real estate development opportunities and the type of tenants and uses that match each opportunity. Collaboration and plan formulation in order to identify desired and supportable uses that are appropriate with downtown should be the focal point of a tenant retention and recruitment strategy. The strategy should pay careful attention to the types of businesses that are needed to support residential living in the downtown.	Main Street Huntington Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VI-C-3	Continue to build upon the recently implemented “Do More Huntington” marketing campaign in order to attract customers and visitors to the downtown. A fresh branded image of downtown Huntington will help attract notoriety and reinvigorate its identity.	Chamber of Commerce Visitors & Convention Bureau	0-5 Years



# IMPLEMENTATION

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VI. Downtown (continued)</u>			
VI-D-1	Encourage the development and redevelopment of properties in the downtown area that are context sensitive. Pursue tenants that are suitable for the vision of downtown and goals of the comprehensive plan.	Main Street Huntington Chamber of Commerce City of Huntington	Ongoing
VI-D-2	Revisit zoning classifications and permitted uses in a manner that is custom tailored to the downtown and allows the flexibility required to perpetuate original densities and uses.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
VI-D-3	Promote mixed use development in a manner that expands economic development opportunities and brings a variety of compatible uses together under a single roof.	Plan Commission Main Street Huntington Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VI-D-4	Strongly encourage the development of downtown housing opportunities. Incorporating residential living is possibly the most important development strategy that Huntington can make in order to reinvest in its downtown. Housing should include the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock and the addition of alternative urban housing options.	Main Street Huntington City of Huntington	Ongoing
VI-D-5	Implement appropriate elements of the 2019 Downtown Parking Study.	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
VI-E-1	Revisit development standards in conjunction with the downtown zoning classes in order to ensure that new development and redevelopment are consistent in appearance and character to the historic buildings throughout downtown. Building heights and scales should match those of existing adjacent structures. Maintain as much building line along the street as is practical and use a landscaped edge when set back.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
VI-E-2	Encourage ornate facades and windowed storefronts that create an inviting atmosphere along the sidewalk and duplicate the historic building stock.	Main Street Huntington City of Huntington	Ongoing
VI-E-3	The backs of buildings should be functional, attractive, and identifiable; but remain service oriented.	Main Street Huntington Plan Commission	Ongoing
VI-F-1	Strengthen the long-term sustainability of downtown retail by: promoting retail and dining as entertainment, increased appeal to younger consumers (18-40 years old), featuring unique merchandise and services to complement area shopping centers, offering merchandise at a reasonable and moderate price point, extending hours of operations, and supporting mixed use projects and residential development.	Main Street Huntington Chamber of Commerce Visitors & Convention Bureau	Ongoing
VI-F-2	Help strengthen independent businesses, resulting in increased profitability and market penetration of existing businesses in order to help compete with chain retail. Providing independent businesses with market information, business district management and promotion, and small business assistance can help to increase their overall performance.	Chamber of Commerce Main Street Huntington	Ongoing
VI-F-3	Main Street Huntington and the Downtown Business Association must continue to manage and promote downtown, while working to identify the right mixture and critical mass of retail. This will lead to business expansion opportunities for existing businesses. Business retention and recruitment is a necessary component of an overall retail strategy.	Main Street Huntington Downtown Business Association Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VI. Downtown (continued)</u>			
VI-F-4	Encouraging community participation and action can help to ensure that local businesses regain and retain their role in a healthy local economy. Public awareness is the first step in getting the public and businesses to understand issues. Then the public stakeholders can be mobilized to promote independent businesses and encourage local consumers to patronize local establishments.	Main Street Huntington Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VI-F-5	Support programs that seek to make use of empty storefronts in a manner that provide an alternative to empty buildings and vacant storefronts. Historical or art displays could be utilized to create a visually stimulating look that is inviting to residents and visitors.		
VI-G-1	Identify and develop linkage opportunities within the existing downtown area and actively promote the downtown as an ideal location for new businesses. Opportunities should be pursued to link parks and open space via trails, greenways, and bike routes; thereby integrating open space as a key component of the downtown character and quality of life. Convenient vehicular and alternative transportation from surrounding neighborhoods to the downtown core is vital to the long term sustainability of downtown. Amenities should be provided to accommodate these alternative transportation options, such as bicycle racks.	Main Street Huntington Chamber of Commerce Parks & Recreation Department	Ongoing
VI-G-2	Downtown should carefully study its pedestrian circulation in order to guide future development and promote an urban, mixed use, and walkable environment that is in contrast to current auto-dependent development patterns. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation will enhance the appeal of downtown while preserving natural and cultural assets. Trails and on-street linkages will create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages and abilities with attractive, safe, and accessible places to bike, jog, and walk. In doing so, downtown can gain economically, socially, and environmentally, all the while providing services for a more active community.	Main Street Huntington Parks & Recreation Department	5-10 Years
VI-G-3	Revisit land use and development patterns in a manner that will lead to a more aesthetically pleasing image when entering and exiting the downtown by gradually transitioning between land uses. In addition, dedicated routes used by visitors to access the downtown should be evaluated to ensure that the most appropriate routes are utilized.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
VI-H-1	Support the implementation of appropriate elements from the Community Arts Plan, as updated.	LaFontaine Arts Council City of Huntington	Ongoing
VI-H-2	Continue to support and promote art and cultural events in downtown Huntington. Foster genuine commitments from stakeholders to support the development of the arts and culture within the downtown.	Main Street Huntington LaFontaine Arts Council Visitors & Convention Bureau	Ongoing
VI-H-3	Continue the promotion, operation, and administration of the museums, historic sites, and art facilities to offer entertainment opportunities to residents and visitors. Encourage public art projects in public and private developments, all the while continuing annual public art programs. Promote the collaboration among arts organizations, the downtown, the City of Huntington, and other stakeholders.	LaFontaine Arts Council Visitors & Convention Bureau	Ongoing
VI-H-4	Continue and expand the marketing and promotion of Huntington's arts and cultural events. Assist residents and visitors in their desire to participate with Huntington's institutions and initiatives. Encourage the location of new and expanding cultural facilities along major corridors, and work to support the development of institutions. Coordinate the marketing of arts and cultural activities with downtown partners and print media.	LaFontaine Arts Council Visitors & Convention Bureau	Ongoing

# IMPLEMENTATION

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VII. Economic Development</u>			
VII-C-1	Continue to work towards implementing appropriate elements of strategic and master plans compiled by the economic development partners of the City of Huntington.	HCUED Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VII-C-2	Identify clustering opportunities that provide for the targeting of industries and businesses that are suppliers or customers of existing local establishments. Also, identify new expansion opportunities for businesses that have needs similar to successful local businesses that are likely to benefit from Huntington's business environment.	HCUED	Ongoing
VII-C-3	Improve the quality and variety of retail, commercial, and service businesses through land use strategies and zoning reform policies throughout the City. Further develop mixed use land use categories and zoning to promote a mixture of business types within certain geographical areas where appropriate. Examine the creation of additional zoning classifications to fill existing land use voids within the zoning code that allow for expanded economic opportunities where appropriate.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
VII-C-4	Build upon recent successes and foster further consensus and regular communication between businesses, government, and other economic development partners in a manner which allows for continued economic success.	HCUED Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VII-C-5	Continue to support and expand upon existing training opportunities, higher education, and co-op programs in order to sustain economic success and prosperity by investing in the local labor force.	Educational Community Huntington County Community Learning Center	Ongoing
VII-C-6	Strengthen Huntington's overall tourism development through the pursuit of additional tourism programs that focus on the growing downtown and area cultural attractions and events.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	0-5 Years
VII-D-1	Immediately begin development of the new industrial park so that economic development partners have ample available resources to market land, new job opportunities can be developed, and the tax base can further be sustained.	City of Huntington Redevelopment Commission HCED	0-5 Years
VII-D-2	Continue to maintain low vacancy rates at existing industrial parks while supporting existing industries in their success and expansions when such opportunities present themselves.	HCED	Ongoing
VII-D-3	Continue to market available industrial opportunities at a variety of levels which yield substantial economic success.	HCED	Ongoing
VII-D-4	Formally develop long term development plans for the Huntington Municipal Airport and its surrounding land, exploring economic development opportunities that are suitable for the unique environment available.	Airport Board HCUED City of Huntington Huntington County	5-10 Years
VII-D-5	Maintain and expand existing infrastructure so that industrial land remains viable to support business.	City of Huntington	Ongoing

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VII. Economic Development (continued)</u>			
VII-D-6	Ensure that labor supply issues are continually addressed and marketed through education institutions. Continue to work closely with area universities, colleges, vocational/technical training programs, and local manufacturers to ensure an adequate labor supply exists.	Educational Community  Huntington County Community Learning Center  HCUED  Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VII-D-7	Focus marketing, attraction, and retention efforts on key sectors that have established strong concentrations in the City's economic base. While operating with a focus, the City is uniquely responsive to those that provide significant employment, reasonable income tax return, or offer opportunities for growth. As efforts are made to focus on economic clusters, they should be done in order to maximize available land so that the City can capture as much development as feasible on industrially zoned land.	HCED  Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VII-D-8	Revisit industrial zoning classifications and standards in order to prevent policies from inhibiting economic development. Reform should be implemented in a manner in which it does not compromise surrounding land uses or conflict with the Comprehensive plan.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
VII-E-1	Develop a downtown office niche marketing strategy. This will allow for ancillary uses to take advantage of underutilized second story space in the downtown and provide additional job opportunities in the city core.	Main Street Huntington  Chamber of Commerce	5-10 Years
VII-E-2	Consider incentive packages such as tax abatements or grants that promote the development of downtown office uses. Most reluctance to locate in the downtown will be because of parking and the high cost of building rehabilitation to meet the needs of the business and satisfy code requirements. Creative approaches to solving these problems need to be identified before the downtown can become a viable office area.	City of Huntington	5-10 Years
VII-E-3	Promote mixed use development on the periphery and along major corridors. This must be done in an orderly and appropriate fashion to prevent sprawl and preserve character. Such developments should be planned, well landscaped, and of appropriate scale.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
VII-F-1	An important issue for the area north of the bypass is the large-scale, rapidly developing, strip and big box retail centers. These areas, combined with spin-off retail, are a major draw for Huntington residents. As such, Downtown must solidify its role as a niche market location in order to remain competitive and prevent a leakage in retail expenditures to areas outside of downtown.	Main Street Huntington  Chamber of Commerce	0-5 Years
VII-F-2	Huntington's locally owned small businesses are an important part of its overall image that is attractive to residents and visitors alike. However, these businesses are quickly disappearing due to their inability to compete with larger retail. Efforts must be undertaken to reinforce and preserve existing retail offerings.	Chamber of Commerce	0-5 Years
VII-F-3	Downtown is quickly emerging as the entertainment venue for nearby residents. This growth will lead to increased consumer activity at nearby businesses and help to improve the overall vibrancy of downtown. This must be capitalized on in order to diversify offerings and assist the downtown in regaining a competitive edge.	Main Street Huntington  Chamber of Commerce  Visitors & Convention Bureau	5-10 Years



Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VII. Economic Development (continued)</u>			
VII-F-4	For a small community rich in history, a key marketing strategy is to build upon the inflow of tourists and day-trippers from outside of the existing trade area. Key elements include the development of unique tourist amenities that cater to guests and help to bolster the community's image as a getaway location. Restaurants, conference facilities, heritage corridors, and tourist attractions are also important marketing elements that should be considered as part of a tourism marketing strategy.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	0-5 Years
VII-F-5	Huntington must advance its efforts to attract new retail offerings to the community in order to capture local dollars and contribute to the local economy. Retail offerings should be diverse and service various socioeconomic markets in order to appeal to the entire community.	Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VII-F-6	Huntington has a long history in fostering local entrepreneurship; it must build upon its past success and expand its support network to allow startup businesses to gain insight in the areas of merchandising, strategies, succession planning, market research, building improvements, and financial incentives/assistance in order to be successful.	HCUED Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
VII-F-7	A number of land use strategies should be examined in order to benefit Huntington's retail environment. Such strategies include pedestrian amenities, mixed use developments, enhanced gateways into Huntington, improved development standards, and streetscape and corridor improvements. These strategies should be employed in a manner which discourages single-use, suburban, retail development along major corridors.	Plan Commission City of Huntington	Ongoing
VII-F-8	Current zoning classifications should be reviewed in order to determine that retail uses are permitted within appropriate zoning districts. More specifically, certain types of retail uses should be limited to higher intensity zoning classifications in a planned fashion.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
VII-G-1	Huntington must continue to work with area attractions and events to strengthen its overall tourism industry. It is likely that the community would benefit from a comprehensive tourism strategy that includes an effective branding campaign and expanded travel offerings to increase regional, statewide, and out of town travelers.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	Ongoing
VII-G-2	Increasing the number of overnight stays is currently the only way for Huntington to financially sustain its tourism efforts while substantially impacting the local economy. Possible strategies include developing itineraries for multi-day experiences and working with employers to place contractors and visitors locally.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	0-5 Years
VII-G-3	Currently, a number of lodging options exist for out of town guests. It is possible that a program to educate local hospitality workers on Huntington County attractions should be developed in order to encourage additional dollars to be spent locally and increase the level of satisfaction with guest's overall visit to the area.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	5-10 Years
VII-G-4	The tourism arm of Huntington must continue to work with stakeholders such as HCED and the Chamber of Commerce to help attract quality destinations to the community. It must also continue its participation with downtown merchants in order to help grow the downtown as a local destination. Furthermore, it must determine ways in which to communicate with local government on key issues that affect tourism functions and continue to act as an advocacy for tourism as a form of economic development.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	0-5 Years

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VII. Economic Development (continued)</u>			
VII-H-1	Continue to evaluate projects based upon set policies that ensure sufficient returns for the City, which is relative to employment levels and tax revenue that justify incentive packages. Incentives are limited and should be strategically utilized and targeted when appropriate. Each project is unique and should be evaluated based upon its own merits with consideration to return of investment and length of benefit.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
VII-H-2	Ensure that projects which are awarded incentives are consistent with the Comprehensive plan. This consistency is measured relative to land use, density, location, infrastructure, and character. Such consistency will ensure that the plan vision is supported.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
VII-H-3	Continue to package incentives, utilizing various types and sources of incentives, in a matter that is responsive to projects and fulfills the City's economic priorities.	City of Huntington HCUED Huntington County	Ongoing
VII-H-4	Establish economic development priorities and provide incentives accordingly to projects that are consistent with the economic, land use, and infrastructure policies of the City of Huntington.	City of Huntington HCUED	Ongoing
VII-H-5	Continue to utilize TIF for projects that require significant infrastructure improvements in order to facilitate economic development and improve quality of life.	Redevelopment Commission	Ongoing
VII-H-6	Continue to work with Huntington County, HCED, and the State of Indiana to structure and implement incentives. These economic partners most often work cooperatively to compile incentive packages and coordinate projects, although some projects may only qualify for select incentives from various agencies.	City of Huntington	Ongoing

<u>VIII. Education</u>			
VIII-C-1	Pursue grants and other funding mechanisms, such as Safe Routes to School that provide for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements to improve school safety and promote alternative transportation options.	City of Huntington Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-C-2	Strengthen the role of parents as "first teachers" to allow for early development and learning, as well as increase parental involvement and encouragement in their child's education.	Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-C-3	Work to improve access to advanced technology in educational facilities to promote cutting edge learning opportunities that are relevant and competitive on the global scale.	Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-C-4	Local government will continue to recognize education as an important element. The government will interface with educational partners and improve opportunities for internships and job shadowing experiences within local government.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
VIII-C-5	Promote and encourage student involvement within the community, allowing students to give back, become engaged, and grow personal community pride in the youth population.	Educational Community	Ongoing

# IMPLEMENTATION

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VIII. Education (continued)</u>			
VIII-D-1	Incorporate long range planning efforts between the university community and the City of Huntington to ensure that all parties achieve mutual benefit as it relates to land use, facilities, and infrastructure.	City of Huntington Huntington University	Ongoing
VIII-D-2	Continue to provide adult education opportunities that allow the current workforce to remain competitive, advance their careers, and provide for non-traditional higher education opportunities.	Huntington County Community Learning Center  Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-D-3	Support efforts that allow students to become involved in the local community, establishing personal connections that encourage the retention of these students as citizens after they graduate.	Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-D-4	Continue to work cooperatively in the continuous investment and expansion in the Huntington County Community Learning Center's offerings.	Huntington County Community Learning Center  Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-E-1	Expand programs aimed at improving the literacy rate among the residents of Huntington which will allow them to lead more productive lives.	HCTPL  Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-E-2	Continue to focus on children's services in a manner that perpetuates the high standard of diverse programming currently being offered to the community.	HCTPL	Ongoing
VIII-F-1	Review existing partnerships and create new partnerships with workforce preparation programs to foster literacy skills in career and technical education.	Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-F-2	Further collaboration and communication between educational institutions and industries in order to ensure that students are given options to obtain a world-class education and provided with a training environment that supports Huntington's growing manufacturing community.	Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-F-3	Focus on advanced technology and skill learning, careers and business development. Investigate opportunities for university, community, state, federal, and industrial partnerships to enhance the advancement, implementation, and application of information technology. All stakeholders should work together to develop technologically driven programs and careers with business partnerships. All businesses that need technologically savvy employees and high-tech businesses require even higher levels of expertise. Preparing students and retaining adult workers for these jobs are significant challenges for educators and businesses.	Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-F-4	Continue to develop and work to increase awareness of co-op programs and career development opportunities for students in Huntington. Educational institutions should further their partnerships with Huntington County Economic Development and the Huntington County Chamber of Commerce to ensure that students take advantage and industries are aware of immersive learning opportunities.	Educational Community	Ongoing
VIII-G-1	Continue to support programs and organizations which promote youth development and leadership.	Community	Ongoing

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>IX. Transportation</u>			
IX-M-1	The City of Huntington should consider preparing a comprehensive transportation plan to aid in planning for future transportation needs. The document should be a cooperative effort between the Engineering Department, Street Department, and Police Department; with consultation sought from the Plan Commission, County Highway Department, and the Indiana Department of Transportation.	City of Huntington	5-10 Years
IX-M-2	Design elements such as street width and scale, presence of on-street parking and sidewalks, block lengths, building setbacks, design speeds, street trees and pavement markings should all be evaluated in order to create uniform standards to be applied to roadway improvements. Focus should be placed upon these elements as a means of improving overall roadway and community character.	Engineering Department Community Development & Redevelopment Department	0-5 Years
IX-M-3	The identification of specific routes for truck traffic should be included in the created transportation plan. Truck routes should be identified along primary roadways that service commercial and industrial areas in order to guide traffic from state routes onto suitable local streets in order to reach their destination. It is important that this type of traffic be discouraged from traveling through residential areas.	City of Huntington	5-10 Years
IX-M-4	Specific corridor improvements (limited to city limits) - It is important to note that any character improvements within the right-of-way may not maximize overall character improvements to a specific area without significant character improvement efforts on the part of private property owners along any given corridor. (See page IX-17 for a list of corridor improvements)	City of Huntington	10-15 Years
IX-M-5	Residents of Huntington expect low volumes of traffic and low vehicle speeds within residential neighborhoods. Increases in local traffic, street width, and other factors may cause neighborhood traffic safety concerns. Traffic calming is a way to visually and physically impede speeding within residential areas. The physical change in road parameters and the psychological change in the feel of a roadway combine to reduce the speed of vehicles. Techniques such as speed bumps, speed tables, street narrowing, slow points, chokers, channelization, intersection diverters, street closures, roundabouts, and perimeter treatments should be evaluated on a case by case basis when new roadways are built or existing roadways are redesigned in order to improve safety.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IX-M-6	Street capacity refers to the capability of a roadway to accommodate the expected traffic flow with an acceptable amount of delay or congestion. Traffic engineers measure capacity through a comparison of volumes at peak hours to the original design capacity in order to determine the level of service of a roadway. Roadway improvement projects generally fall into two categories: capacity expansion or capacity preservation. Capacity expansion projects include roadway widening or additional lanes. Capacity preservation includes roadway reconstruction that does not add capacity or enhance the roadway. Major planned transportation improvements illustrated on the map at the end of this chapter should seek to provide for adequate street capacity.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IX-M-7	When applicable, consult other plans and documents when planning and designing roadway improvements in order to maximize potential benefits. This will allow minor or additional projects to “piggy-back” on a major roadway project and take advantage of cost sharing.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IX-M-8	Continue to evaluate, update, and implement the 2007 Trails and Greenways Master Plan.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
IX-M-9	Evaluate, implement, and update, the 2020 Huntington Municipal Airport Capital Improvement Plan.	City of Huntington	Ongoing



# IMPLEMENTATION

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>X. Housing</u>			
X-C-1	Promote the maintenance of existing and the creation of new housing options of various types to meet the needs of all residents regardless of socio-economic status.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
X-C-2	Continue to support the rehabilitation and maintenance of the existing housing stock in a manner which provides for increased visual appeal and improved property values across the City.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
X-C-3	Continue to pursue grant opportunities which provide for housing rehabilitation, energy efficiency improvements, and the general maintenance of owner-occupied residences for lower income groups who lack the financial resources to undertake such projects on their own.	City of Huntington Community Agencies	Ongoing
X-C-4	Continue to promote the development of neighborhood groups and other consensus building organizations throughout the City of Huntington to expand vested interest and create community pride. In addition, homeowner education opportunities should be promoted and encouraged in a manner that leads to more sustainable homeownership, thereby creating more stable neighborhoods and improving quality of life.	City of Huntington Community Agencies	Ongoing
X-C-5	Evaluate and develop strategies which ensure that rental units are properly maintained, protecting tenants and properties. Strategies should obligate landlords and tenants to comply with minimum requirements, while protecting rental housing quality, property values, neighborhood character, and the health of tenants.	City of Huntington Community Development & Redevelopment Department	0-5 Years
X-C-6	Strongly consider the development and implementation of residential property codes and enforcement, beyond the existing nuisance code, in order to help preserve property values. It is noted that existing codes and ordinances have proven ineffective in terms of character and value preservation and that existing staffing levels may not be adequate for such a program.	City of Huntington Community Development & Redevelopment Department	5-10 Years
X-C-7	Continue to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of existing properties of historical significance. Additionally, continue to evaluate the need to create new historic districts, which allow increased opportunities for the rehabilitation of structures of cultural value, when current physical status allows.	Historic Review Board	Ongoing
X-C-8	Encourage the development of single-family, owner-occupied housing on vacant, orphaned, or underutilized land located in established areas of the City. Encourage quality housing through increased development standards in an attempt to deter blight and urban decay by promoting home ownership. Promote infill housing development that both residents and visitors recognize as being of high quality and aesthetically pleasing to neighborhoods.	Plan Commission City of Huntington	Ongoing
X-C-9	Evaluate the effectiveness of residential property tax abatements for targeted areas of the City in a manner which preserves the existing housing stock, improves appearance, and increases property values.	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
X-C-10	Support initiatives and programs such as “Aging in Place”, which allow housing options and support services for seniors, in order to promote independence and preserve established neighborhoods.	Community Agencies City of Huntington	Ongoing
X-C-11	Continue efforts towards establishing permanent and transitional housing options which provide subsidized housing for disadvantaged/disabled populations on a short term basis between life events or to those residents needing permanent support.	Community Agencies	Ongoing
X-C-12	Promote neighborhood scale agricultural such as rooftop and community gardens and other appropriate limited agriculture that helps to increase locally sourced foods.	City of Huntington	Ongoing

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>XI. Parks and Recreation</u>			
XI-C-1	Continue to coordinate park improvements with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as updated.	Parks & Recreation Department	Ongoing
XI-C-2	Preserve current parks and expand parkland where warranted and when opportunities arise, in order to fulfill the needs of the communities.	Parks & Recreation Department	Ongoing
XI-C-3	Implement capital projects and park improvements in conjunction with long range plans as funding opportunities are available.	Parks & Recreation Department	Ongoing
XI-C-4	Evaluate the need and effectiveness of incorporating greenspace requirements into the Subdivision Control Ordinance to create open space amenities within major subdivisions, improve connectivity, and reduce the cost burden on taxpayers.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years
XI-D-1	Continue to evaluate, update, and implement the 2007 Trails and Greenways Master Plan.	Parks & Recreation Department	Ongoing
XI-D-2	Improve connectivity throughout the community and create regional linkages with trails and greenways.	Parks & Recreation Department	10-15 Years
XI-E-1	Continually evaluate the number and types of programs offered to the public, with a focus on maintaining high quality and diverse in demand programs.	Parks & Recreation Department	Ongoing
XI-F-1	Encourage recreational related businesses in proximity to recreational amenities and explore ways to expand upon existing tourism in order to draw more visitors to the community and increase economic dividends.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	Ongoing
XI-F-2	Utilize the endless amount of recreational opportunities as a marketing tool when attracting new residents to Huntington.	Community	Ongoing
XI-G-1	Continue to promote facilities and organizations which promote the health of the community and its residents. Creating a more desirable quality of life for residents and visitors alike.	Community	Ongoing
XI-G-2	Continue to promote the facilities and organizations in order to expand awareness of the services that they offer to the community and market them in a regional fashion so that they may play a role in tourism.	Visitors & Convention Bureau	Ongoing

# IMPLEMENTATION

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
XII. Sustainability and Preservation			
XII-C-1	The City of Huntington should identify and implement ways in which further public education about stormwater management could be carried out.	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
XII-C-2	The City of Huntington should act as a role model for environmental stewardship by embracing, promoting, and implementing environmentally sound construction, development, and land use practices on behalf of the public; which can help to lower the operating costs of public buildings and services.	City of Huntington	Ongoing
XII-C-3	Current development standards should be evaluated in order to ensure that alternative surface treatments, environmentally sensitive designs, and reduced parking requirements are permissible in order to decrease dependence on the current stormwater system and potentially eliminate the need for costly upgrades and expansions. An incentive based approach to this strategy may be the most appropriate in order to gain traction in public utilization.	Plan Commission Engineering Department	0-5 Years
XII-C-4	Developments should avoid negatively impacting or reducing wetlands when designing sites and buildings. Whenever feasible, wetlands should be conserved; when wetlands are eliminated, it should be done in a manner consistent with an approved wetland mitigation plan. As a general policy, the City will strongly stress the avoidance of wetland areas for development.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
XII-C-5	The City of Huntington should encourage the development and replanting of tree-lined streets, expand its role in the Tree City USA program, and promote the reforestation of City property where appropriate in order to promote urban forestry and improve the health and aesthetic qualities of the community	City of Huntington	Ongoing
XII-C-6	The City of Huntington's development process currently does not address the location, conservation, or mitigation of species habitats. Species habitat protection should be considered an integral part of open space preservation.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
XII-D-1	The City of Huntington will utilize its Historic Review Board as a city-wide preservation agency. As such, it should continue to identify and preserve historic properties, review development and demolition activities which may impact historic value, and provide public information and assistance about preservation.	Historic Review Board	Ongoing
XII-D-2	The preservation of Huntington's historic districts is dependent upon its ability to continue to inventory historic sites, buildings, and related resources; implement design review guidelines for historic districts and properties; identify, preserve and use historic resources for future generations; and increase public awareness about the opportunities and benefits of being designated as a district or site.	Historic Review Board	Ongoing
XII-D-3	Pursue the incremental designation of new local historic districts, utilizing the new districts as a way to demonstrate the economic, aesthetic, and historic benefits that coincide with such designation.	Historic Review Board	5-10 Years
XII-D-4	Evaluate the effectiveness of offering residential property tax abatements for the improvement of historically significant homes as a means of encouraging preservation and expanding the existing tax base.	City of Huntington	5-10 Years
XII-E-1	Continue to work with appropriate state and federal agencies in order to adequately address the environmental concerns present at the former H.K Porter/ Friction Materials property. Grants and other assistance should be sought for the clean-up and redevelopment of this environmentally hazardous property. Furthermore, additional precautions should be taken in order to prevent this type of situation from occurring in the future elsewhere within the City of Huntington.	City of Huntington Redevelopment Commission	1-5 Years
XII-E-2	Evaluate the effectiveness of incorporating basic environmental standards into various City of Huntington regulatory land use documents in order to provide for more accountable environmental protections.	Plan Commission	10-15 Years

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
XIII. Land Use			
XIII-D-1	Strive to maintain a balance of land uses to reflect the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan. This complex task ensures that tax revenues are generated to support residential development (since it is generally not self-sustaining). It is crucial that an adequate supply of undeveloped land exists to ensure that economic opportunities which are beneficial to the City will take place. It is also important to improve the balance between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units by increasing homeownership, which helps to build wealth and stability in the community. The City has become home to many rental properties over the years, some of which lead to unsatisfactory community development. Land use balance also includes the protection of irreplaceable open space and prime farmland near or just outside of its fringes.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
XIII-D-2	The City should promote, consider, and approve developments that adhere to the density requirements and intensity of uses that are sustainable and fit within the strategies and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The City should administer development policies and procedures in conjunction with sound planning principles and flexibility to ensure that unforeseen circumstances and opportunities are properly considered within the overall context of the Comprehensive Plan.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
XIII-D-3	Land use transitions (at the community, neighborhood, and site level) must be adequate and appropriate to minimize negative impacts and to provide for an integrated community. Proper transitions ensure the development of rational land use patterns that are consistent with the City's vision.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
XIII-D-4	The City of Huntington should work cooperatively with its Redevelopment Commission and Huntington County to create a land bank program that is geared towards the redevelopment of distressed areas of the City. Within the City, it is likely that a residential land bank program would be the most beneficial, although industrial land banking would also be a worthwhile investment in the future.	City of Huntington Redevelopment Commission Huntington County	Ongoing
XIII-D-5	The City expects future development to use creative site design in order to accomplish the following detailed objectives. These approaches should be utilized when designing sites.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
XIII-D-6	The City of Huntington should continually evaluate the need to exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction as may be allowed by state law to areas beyond its current corporate limits. The areas just beyond the City's limits often face unique development pressures as common development trends are to build upon vacant agricultural land instead of seeking redevelopment opportunities. Because of such development pressures, it is critically important that the City play a role in the development of these fringe areas, especially when City services are anticipated or already provided. The City cannot rely solely on the county to determine which land uses are in its best interests in these fringe areas.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
XIII-F-1	The current City of Huntington Zoning Code is not user-friendly. Several general changes are recommended to significantly improve the user's ability to read and understand code requirements.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-2	Modify the existing Euclidian zoning system in order to develop a hybrid, pyramid zoning hierarchy. Instead of a standard pyramid which allows all users in more restrictive districts to be automatically allowed into each successive (less restrictive) district, this system would only allow certain uses from the less restrictive district or more commonly those uses with one degree of separation into the more restrictive district.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-3	Establish more commercial districts of varying degrees of intensity and scale. Each district should have a distinct purpose, be applicable in specific situations, and differ from one another in terms of the permitted uses and desired character.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years



Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
XIII. Land Use			
XIII-F-4	Condense the number of industrial zoning districts within the City based upon an evaluation of the types of permitted uses within each district. It is assumed that one or more of the districts could be eliminated based upon such reclassification.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-5	All definitions should be consolidated into a single definition section, thereby eliminating duplicates and definitions of various meanings. In the case of sections in which unique definitions may apply, those unique definitions should be clearly limited to only the applicable section.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-6	A “General Provisions” section should be added to encompass many of the standards that are scattered throughout the zoning code and do not have a fully developed section or relationship to one another.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-7	The Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions in the zoning code have been developed as required by state law. The PUD standards should be evaluated and possibly updated, as relaxed standards have resulted in abuse of the PUD. While a PUD can be a useful tool to encourage creative design that benefits the end user and the community, it is not appropriate in all cases and is not intended to be a convenient substitute for conventional zoning requirements or to circumvent the rezoning process.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-8	The off-street parking requirements within the Zoning Code should be reviewed and updated. The City should consider the incorporation of shared parking standards in areas where appropriate and possibly eliminating off-street parking requirements for unique areas such as the downtown.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-9	Standards or criteria should be incorporated into the Zoning Code for all official decisions. This will eliminate the possibility of discretionary reviews which lack standards for decision-makers to utilize.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-10	All official zoning approvals should incorporate set expiration dates, typically of two years, to prevent non-conformities from being created many years after their initial approval in a manner that is not consistent with updated regulatory documents.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-F-11	The Zoning Code should be redeveloped in order to incorporate the vision, goals, and objectives of this plan.	Plan Commission	0-5 Years
XIII-G-1	The current City of Huntington Subdivision Code, while more modern than the Zoning Code, is still not as user-friendly as it could be. Several general changes are recommended to significantly improve the user’s ability to read and understand code requirements.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years
XIII-G-2	The definitions section should be reviewed and updated to reflect modern and appropriate terminology.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years
XIII-G-3	Standards from The City of Huntington Street Manual should be incorporated by reference into the Subdivision Code. In addition, it is recommended that the Street Manual be reviewed and updated by the appropriate City Departments.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years
XIII-G-4	The Subdivision Code should be redeveloped in order to incorporate the vision, goals, and objectives of this plan.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years

## D. Completed Strategies and Recommendations

The following completed implementation matrix has been developed by the Community Development and Redevelopment Department and Plan Commission as a way to track the overall implementation of the Plan. While many of the strategies and recommendations are ongoing and will never be fully complete, the following table provides an opportunity to detail when and how strategies and recommendations from the original 2012 Comprehensive Plan have been completed.

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
IV. City Image and Identity			
IV-D-1	Develop a primary gateway program that establishes uniform gateway signage and landscaping at all primary gateways and ensure consistent maintenance of these areas.	Visitors & Convention Bureau City of Huntington	0-5 Years
✓	2015: The City commissioned a standard primary gateway sign design and assigned ongoing maintenance responsibilities to the Parks & Recreation Department.		
V. Government and Community Services			
V-E-4	As part of a Capital Improvement Plan, develop a phased rate increase schedule for each utility in order to ensure that adequate financing is in place to support necessary infrastructure improvements, maintenance, and expansion	City of Huntington	0-5 Years
✓	2017: A 5 year phased water rate scheduled was adopted by Council. It is assumed that after 2021 a new schedule will be adopted.  2018: A 5 year phased sewer rate scheduled was adopted by Council. It is assumed that after 2021 a new schedule will be adopted.		
V-F-2	Develop a unified Capital Improvement Plan to ensure that new infrastructure and maintenance of existing infrastructure is adequately provided in the most cost efficient manner.	City of Huntington	5-10 Years
✓	2019: A Capital Improvement Plan was completed and adopted by the administration for all City Departments and the utilities. The plan was developed for a 5 year period and it is assumed that after 2023 a new Capital Improvement Plan will be adopted.		
V-G-2	Evaluate the effectiveness of combining and consolidating public safety functions, such as combined dispatch and mutual aid agreements, with other agencies and jurisdictions that maximize the level of public service and reduce costs for all parties involved in a manner that result in a lower tax burden to the public.	City of Huntington Huntington County	0-5 Years
✓	2013: City and County dispatch functions were consolidated into a single public safety answering point (PSAP) at the County ahead of a new state law which aimed to curb the redundancy associated with multiple PSAP.  <i>Note: This remains an ongoing strategy and recommendation of the plan as more opportunities for consolidation may exist among various levels/units of local government.</i>		

## IMPLEMENTATION

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VI. Downtown</u>			
VI-C-3	Develop and implement a marketing campaign in order to attract customers and visitors to the downtown. A fresh branded image of downtown Huntington will help attract notoriety and reinvigorate its identity.	Main Street Huntington Visitors & Convention Bureau Chamber of Commerce HCED	0-5 Years
✓	2015: The Huntington County Chamber of Commerce launched an “Eat. Shop. Live.” campaign encourage residents to shop with our local merchants, and help to renew a sense of community pride. The campaign was subsequently updated to include the “Do More Huntington” tag which featured updated branding through promotional materials and banners across the community.		
VI-D-5	Evaluate parking and develop a parking plan to sufficiently address issues. It may be necessary to expand the number of parking facilities, especially once tenant spaces are filled. Additional parking areas should be designed and located in a manner so they do not adversely impact the character of downtown Huntington. Parking facilities should be strategically located in relationship to the demand of the surrounding area.	Main Street Huntington City of Huntington	0-5 Years
✓	2019: The City of Huntington completed a downtown parking study to evaluate all facets impacting parking in the downtown planning area. It is assumed that the City will implement the recommendations of that study as appropriate.		
VI-G-2	Downtown should carefully study its pedestrian circulation in order to guide future development and promote an urban, mixed use, and walkable environment that is in contrast to current auto-dependent development patterns. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation will enhance the appeal of downtown while preserving natural and cultural assets. Trails and on-street linkages will create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages and abilities with attractive, safe, and accessible places to bike, jog, and walk. In doing so, downtown can gain economically, socially, and environmentally, all the while providing services for a more active community.	Main Street Huntington City of Huntington	5-10 Years
✓	2013: Bike routes were introduced in and around the downtown. Those routes have been adjusted as more trails sections are completed to provide multi-modal linkages downtown and across the community.  2016: The former Wabash Railroad Depot at 11 W. State Street was donated to the City by the Schenkel Family in 2013. The City in turn remodeled the facility in 2016 and dedicated it as Schenkel Station. Today the location serves as the community's trail hub and physical home to the Huntington Area Recreational Trail Association (HARTA).  2017: The City completed Section 4 (east) of the Little River Trail which included a spur to Schenkel Station thereby connecting downtown to the growing trail network.		

## VII. Economic Development VII. Economic Development

VII-D-1	Immediately begin the development of a new industrial park(s) so that economic development partners have ample available resources to market land, new job opportunities can be developed, and the tax base can further be sustained.	City of Huntington Redevelopment Commission City of Huntington HCED	0-5 Years
✓	2019: The City provided financial resources to enable HCED to purchase the initial 127 acres just west of the existing Riverfork Industrial Park. The land will become the next generation industrial park for Huntington as additional land is added, utilities are extended and the land is laid out and offered to new and existing industries.		

Number	Description	Responsible Party	Timeframe
<u>VIII. Education</u>			
VIII-D-4	Work cooperatively to invest in the present and future workforce of Huntington by developing a post-secondary career center.	Educational Community Chamber of Commerce Lifelong Learning	5-10 Years
✓	2016: A number of public and private partners collaborated to create the Huntington County Community Learning Center. A regional hub for training, courses and certifications for adult workers who want to upskill or reskill and employers who wait to expand their employees knowledge base. It also houses space for state workforce agencies and education related partners.		

<u>IX. Transportation</u>			
IX-M-4	Specific corridor improvements (limited to city limits) - [See page IX-15]	City of Huntington	10-15 Years
✓	2017: Riverside Drive corridor: Sidewalk improvements, alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, and residential character improvements (partially complete).  2018: Old US 24: Alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, and character upgrades.  2018: Sidewalk improvements, alternative transportation improvements, increased landscaping, wayfinding signage, residential and commercial character upgrades, and traffic calming measures (partially complete).		
IX-M-5	Signage and pavement markings should be utilized to create bicycle routes throughout the City in order to facilitate the use of alternative transportation modes and provide for interconnection between motorized and non-motorized transportation systems.	City of Huntington	10-15 Years
✓	2013: Bike routes were introduced across the City, with 5 established routes currently utilizing a mixture of streets and trails.		

<u>XII. Land Use</u>			
XIII-G-4	All official subdivision approvals should incorporate set expiration dates, typically of two years, to prevent non-conformities from being created many years after their initial approval in a manner that is not consistent with updated regulatory documents.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years
✓	2014: Ordinance 17-C-14 enacted 2 year approval timeframes for minor and major subdivision recording, except in the case of a major subdivision split into sections.		
XIII-G-5	A more practical standard for allowing the development of phased subdivisions should be developed. This would allow for developments that experience delays between phases to reset the timeline for approval expiration in order to remain sensitive to changing market conditions.	Plan Commission	5-10 Years
✓	2014: Ordinance 17-C-14 enacted 2 year approval timeframes for minor and major subdivision recording, except in the case of a major subdivision split into sections.		







## XV. GLOSSARY

“A word is not a crystal, transparent and unchanged, it is the skin of a living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and the time in which it is used.”

-Oliver Wendell Holmes-



**-A-**

**Accessory Use:** This is a secondary use of property, which is in addition to, and secondary to another, primary land use. An example is a garage on a single-family lot.

**Affordable Housing:** A housing unit (owned or rented) for individuals who qualify with income that is below the Federal Government Section 8 income limits. The qualifying individuals pay no more than 30% of their income for principal, interest, taxes and insurance.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** The Americans with Disabilities Act gives civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. The Title I employment provisions apply to private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies, and labor unions. Employers with 15 or more employees are covered.

**Aquifer:** An underground layer of rock, sand, or gravel capable of storing water within cracks and pore spaces, or between grains. When water contained within an aquifer is of sufficient quantity and quality, it can be tapped and used for drinking or other purposes. The water contained in the aquifer is called ground water.

**Architectural Character:** The distinguishing appearance of a building or structure's architectural features, such as roof slope, materials, openings, color, and scale. The character is based on historical and cultural influences.

**Auto-Oriented Design:** A form of development that depends on exposure to auto traffic and presumes people will use cars to travel to and from a site.

**Assessed Value:** The valuation of real estate or personal property as determined by a government unit, such as a city, for the purpose of determining taxes.

**-B-**

**Brownfield:** Abandoned, idled, or under-utilized industrial and commercial property where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination from past business practices. *See also Greenfield.*

**Build Out:** The point at which a community has completely built its land, typically based upon the capacity of infrastructure (especially water and wastewater).

**Buildable Land:** Land which contains constraints that prevent it from being developed or redeveloped. This includes all vacant, partially used, or underutilized land zoned for commercial, industrial, or residential use. A single-family home built on a lot zoned for multi-family housing is an example of underutilized land. Parcels intended for public use or lots with limited building potential are not considered buildable lands.

**Building Codes:** Local regulations that prescribe minimum standards for the construction and maintenance of buildings for purposes of life safety and property protection.

**Building Permit:** A permit issued for various types of building activity that authorizes structural, electrical, heating and cooling, plumbing, demolition, or similar regulated work.

**Built Environment:** The part of the environment formed and shaped by humans, including buildings, structures, landscaping, earth forms, roads, signs, trails, and utilities.

## -C-

**Central Business District (CBD):** A term generally used to describe the heart of a downtown.

**Clutter (Visual, Roadway):** The proliferation of sign posts, utility lines and poles, regulatory signs, signals, advertising and lighting. The result is usually so visually confusing that the communicative intent is seriously undermined. Clutter interrupts the flow of communication from businesses and their signage to the motorist and walker, and is generally aesthetically unpleasant.

**Community Character:** The features that define the built and natural environment within the community and help to create its character. These include the historic buildings in the Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, themed architecture natural waterways or landforms that define parts of the City, woodlands, residential neighborhoods of different types, building density and orientation (auto- or pedestrian-oriented), and the scale and quantity of signage.

**Comprehensive Plan:** A Comprehensive Plan is the central organizing document for planning and managing growth. It consists of the City of Huntington's policies regarding long-term development, and land use maps, which indicate the types and densities of uses. The City requires that zoning ordinances and other City standards are guided by the policy direction set by the Comprehensive Plan.

**Connections:** It is critical for a community to build connections as it grows. Examples of connections are streets, sidewalks and bike paths that interlink neighborhoods, and that link neighborhoods with schools, parks, retail areas, and businesses. Major parts of the community should be linked to ensure a whole community is being developed.

**Corridors:** A corridor is a path used by people as they traverse the community. Corridors can include roads, sidewalks, bike paths, rivers, and streams. The quality of the experience of the traveler along these corridors helps to define the image of the community.

## -D-

**Density:** For non-residential development, density may be expressed either as the gross square footage of a building per acre or as the floor area ratio (*See Floor Area Ratio*). For residential development, density is measured by the number of housing per acre and may be expressed in terms of either gross or net density. Gross density measures the density of a development using the entire site acreage whereas net density reduces the site acreages by an amount for right-of-way and any parkland dedication. From a community wide perspective, gross density is a more accurate measure since it recognizes the value of open-space set-asides while preserving the same development yield, thereby serving as an incentive in return for a public benefit.

**District:** Districts are unique parts of a community in which the uses, buildings and landscape share common features. The features of these districts that support their viability should be protected and enhanced. Examples of districts include the Downtown and unique historic neighborhoods.



**District, Multiple Use:** A multiple-use district is one in which multiple uses are programmed, such as housing, neighborhood scale retail, and office uses. This district provides multiple benefits to the community: it may encourage walking; less parking may be necessary because complementary day and evening uses reduce the overall need for parking; it creates synergistic effects that may enhance the value of the development and revenues to the City.

**District, Single-Use:** A single-use district is one in which one use dominates, such as an auto-oriented shopping center. This type of district is monotonous and does not provide synergistic benefits to the community that result when uses are mixed. Single-use districts increase traffic because trips cannot be shared (driver must visit many different single-use districts to conduct business or run errands).

**Dwelling Units:** A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms or a single room occupied as separate living quarters or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall.

## **-E-**

**Economic Base:** The economic base of the City is defined by the variety of businesses and employers located in the community. A broad base of businesses and employers is critical to minimize impacts on the community from economic downturns, as well as the potential of businesses leaving the community. Another goal is job creation that ensures residents have a variety of employment opportunities, which also necessitates a well-trained work force and sufficient housing to ensure workers can live in the community.

## **-F-**

**Floodplain:** The land adjacent to a stream, river or lake that is subject to flooding by storms whose severity and flooding effects can be measured. That is, a 100-year storm will occur on the average of once every 100 years and will be associated with a certain amount of rainfall and flooding and generate a 100-year floodplain that constitutes both the floodway and the floodway fringe.

## **-G-**

**Gateways:** A gateway is a point at which someone enters the community, typically by automobile. Gateways are very important because the condition of the road, landscape, buildings and signage help to establish an identity for the community. Districts and corridors can also have gateways.

**Geographic Information System (GIS):** A means of producing, analyzing, and storing computerized maps and related data.

**Goal:** A goal statement is provided for each chapter addressed by the Comprehensive Plan (i.e. land use). The policies provide an overarching goal statement supported by a series of principles. This is the basic foundation of policies.

**Greenfield:** A site that has not been developed; typically it is under cultivation or a woodland.

**Greenway:** This can be a natural area or a pedestrian and bicycle path within a natural corridor, often associated with a stream. Frequently greenways provide a pedestrian network, which connects neighborhoods and parks in all parts of the City. The greenway system is also designed to limit inappropriate development in natural areas, protect floodplains, limit damage associated with flooding and protect the wildlife and plant life associated with these natural areas.

## **-H-**

**Historic District:** An area designated by the City to be of historic value. Local districts are regulated through overlay zoning in such a way as to preserve its historic character. Exterior alterations are permitted only if they are in keeping with the historic character of the district. The National Register of Historic Places includes nationally recognized historic districts and places.

**Household:** A household includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

## **-I-**

**Impervious surfaces:** Impervious surfaces are structures that hinder or block the absorption of water into the ground. Large amounts of impervious surfaces in the watershed will have negative effects on the health of bodies of water.

**Infill:** The development of vacant or underdeveloped land (i.e., land that is not developed to the intensity allowed by the existing zoning) in areas that are otherwise substantially developed. This may range from the construction of a new house on a vacant lot in a 50-year- old subdivision to a new commercial building on a vacant lot in the Downtown.

**Infrastructure:** The underlying foundation or basic framework of a City, including streets, parks, bridges, sewers, streetlights, and other utilities.

**Incentives:** Reward for a specific behavior, designed to encourage that behavior.

**Intensity:** Regarding land use, intensity is an indication of the amount and degree of development on a site and is a reflection of the effects generated by that development. These effects include traffic, stormwater runoff, noise and light, etc. *See also Density and Floor Area Ratio.*

## **-L-**

**Land Bank:** A pool of acquired and assembled land in urban areas packaged into sites suitable for redevelopment.

**Landmark:** Distinctive natural or built feature which provides orientation or recognition, helping to give a location some distinction from other places.

**-M-**

**Mission Statement:** The mission statement defines the core purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, why it exists. Effective missions are inspiring, long-term in nature, and easily understood and communicated.

**Mixed Use:** A building can include mixed uses either horizontally (first floor – retail, second floor – office, third floor –residential) or vertically (individual tenant spaces dedicated to retail, office, and residential uses).

**-N-**

**Natural Corridors:** Linear land areas left in a natural state, especially associated with streams and rivers. *See also Greenway.*

**Natural Environment:** Land characterized by having minimal to no alteration of appearance by people.

**-O-**

**Objective:** A series of objectives along with supporting strategies help to further define the policies and guide implementation by addressing the means to implement the policies.

**Open Space:** Land reserved from development as a relief from the effects of urbanization. It is often intended to be used for passive recreation purposes, but may also include pedestrian plazas or active recreation areas.

**Overlay Zoning:** A type of zoning district that modifies another, underlying zoning district. All property that has an overlay zoning district also has an underlying, basic zoning designation. Overlay zoning districts are usually concerned with only a few regulatory aspects of the total zoning of the property. An example is the Flood Hazard Overlay.

**-P-**

**Pedestrian-Oriented Development:** A kind of urban form and land development pattern that is conducive to pedestrian access and circulation rather than or in addition to automobile or transit service. Buildings connect to the sidewalk system and provide facilities for bikes. Density is often higher than suburban environments. These developments are typically higher in density to ensure there is sufficient development to encourage walking. Most people will not walk further than 10-minutes, which can be a distance of ¼ to ½ mile.

**Planned Unit Development:** A project consisting of individually owned parcels of land together with common areas and facilities that are owned by an association of which the owners of all the parcels are members.

**Public Art:** Art that is owned by the public or a non-profit organization and displayed in a public space. Public art is often utilized to add character to a community, emphasize something special or the history of a community or location, and can use a host of mediums (sculpture, landscaping, pavers, painted murals, etc.).

**-Q-**

**Quality of Life:** The attributes or amenities that combine to make an area a good place to live. Examples include the availability of political, educational, and social support systems; good relations among constituent groups; healthy built and natural environments; and economic opportunities for individuals and businesses.

**-R-**

**Regulatory:** The control of something by rules or governing actions controlled by the law originating from policy.

**Retail, Big Box:** A single-tenant, freestanding retail building that can range in size from 50,000 square feet to over 125,000 square feet in gross floor area.

**Retail, Medium Box:** A single-tenant, freestanding retail building that can range in size from 15,000 square feet to 50,000 square feet in gross floor area.

**Retail, Small Box:** A single-tenant, freestanding retail building in size less than 15,000 square feet in gross floor area.

**Rezoning:** A process whereby the zoning of a piece of property changes by City Council from one district to another.

**Right-of-Way (ROW):** The ROW is the total public strip of land within which there is public control and common right of passage and within which pavement, sidewalks, bike paths and some utility lines are located. The Thoroughfare Plan defines the width.

**Roundabouts:** Modern traffic circles that apply engineering principles to a circular intersection as opposed to a traffic signal controlled intersection. Provides for continuous traffic movement that is self-monitored to ensure safety. Roundabouts can result in fewer collisions and pedestrian conflicts than signalized intersections.

**-S-**

**Scale:** The size of a building or structure in relation to a human, varying from intimate to monumental.

**Smart Growth:** Environmentally-sensitive land development with the goals of minimizing dependence on auto transportation, reducing air pollution, and making infrastructure investments more efficient.

**Strip Development:** The tendency of land next to major roadways to develop commercially, on an individual, lot-by-lot basis, with few other land uses. Strip development may be small business, such as automobile shops, convenience stores and fast-food restaurants, one after another for blocks, or rows of shopping centers or combinations of the two. Usually strip development is associated with direct automobile access and visibility from the thoroughfare. It can result in visual clutter, traffic congestion and sprawl, and may create traffic conditions which lead to congestion, delays, high accident rates, air pollution and the like.

**Suburban:** Pertaining to low to medium density development patterns that surround the urban areas of a city. The suburbs are often residential in character, with single-family detached houses being the primary use of land. However, increasingly the suburbs contain employment and services centers, as well as residential areas.

**Sustainability:** (1) A concept that allows for a comfortable way of living by achieving a realistic and achievable balance between the resource demands of environmental, economic and social requirements. (2) An aspect of development and land use that minimizes the use of resources, conserves ecosystems, and creates healthy built environments and landscapes for present and future generations.

## **-T-**

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** An infrastructure funding mechanism by which the net increase in property taxes resulting from private development is captured for a limited period of time and used to fund related public infrastructure, such as road and utility improvements.

**TIF District:** TIF districts are aimed at eliminating blight, rehabilitating declining property values, and promoting industry.

**Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND):** TND is a design approach that borrows from traditional city planning concepts, particularly those of the years 1900-1920, and applies them to modern living. New urbanism integrates housing, shops, workplaces, parks, and civic facilities into closeknit communities that are walkable and have ready access to transit. Also referred to as Neo-Traditionalism and New Urbanism.

**Traffic Calming:** Usually a component of traditional neighborhood design, traffic calming uses physical design features, such as street trees, landscaping bump outs, and textured pavement to slow automobile traffic passing through neighborhoods. The intention is to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods and to make them more pedestrian friendly by slowing or discouraging traffic.

**Traffic Impact Study (TIS):** An analysis of certain new developments to determine the impact on the surrounding transportation system.

**Transit:** The conveyance of people locally from one place to another in multipassenger vehicles along determined routes on a fixed schedule. Usually this term applies to ground transportation other than the automobile. Buses, trains and trolleys are forms of transit. Autos and vans can also be used to provide transit service such as car- or vanpooling, if those vehicles contain more than one occupant.

**Transition, Land Use:** A means of buffering between higher and lower intensity uses. It is generally considered desirable to shield residential areas from the effects of intense land uses, such as noise, bright lights and traffic congestion. This goal can often be achieved by locating a transitional land use between intense and less intense land uses, such as low intensity offices between a shopping center and single-family houses, or through buffering and screening, and additional setbacks.

## **-U-**

**Urban sprawl:** Urban sprawl is a term used to describe a pattern of low density, decentralized development spread over a wide area. Sprawl usually involves automobile- dependent development patterns, and less efficient use of land or capital facilities. It is costlier to maintain infrastructure and provide services to lower density development than to higher density development.



**-V-**

**Variance:** Exceptions to zoning laws.

**Vision Statement:** A vivid, imaginative conception of the future.

**-W-**

**Watershed:** The area that drains into a particular river, stream or lake.

**Wayfinding:** Wayfinding is the ability of a person to find his or her way to a given destination.

**Wetlands:** Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Some wetlands are not easily recognized, often because they are dry during part of the year. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

**Well head:** The surface and subsurface area which surrounds a water well or wellfield that supplies a potable water supply system.

**-Z-**

**Zoning:** Zoning is a map-based system of guiding land use development that divides a city into land-use zones. It specifies the types of land use, setbacks, lot sizes, and restrictions for each piece of property, and affects what an individual can do with the land and the way a neighborhood develops. For example, land can be zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial uses.